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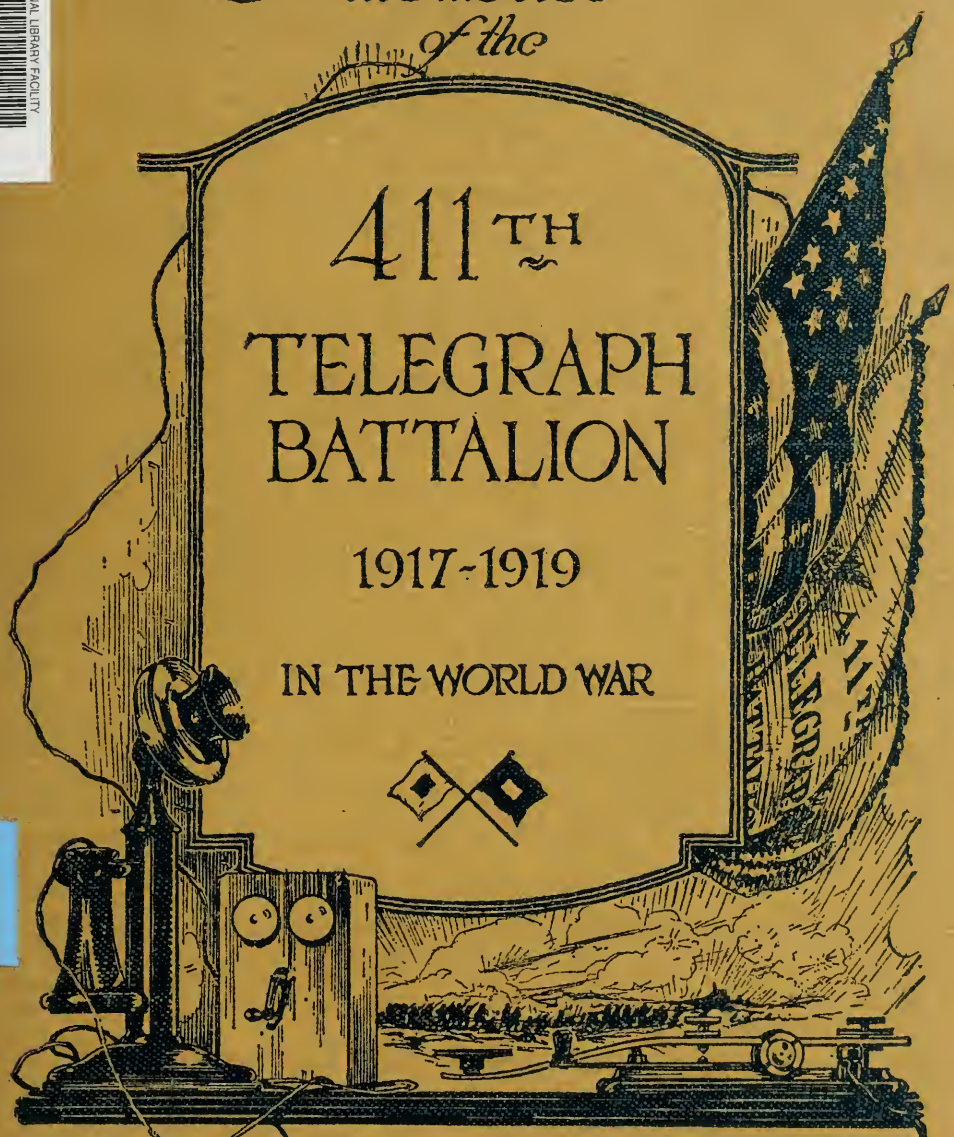
Memories of the

411TH TELEGRAPH BATTALION

1917-1919

IN THE WORLD WAR



HERE AND OVER THERE

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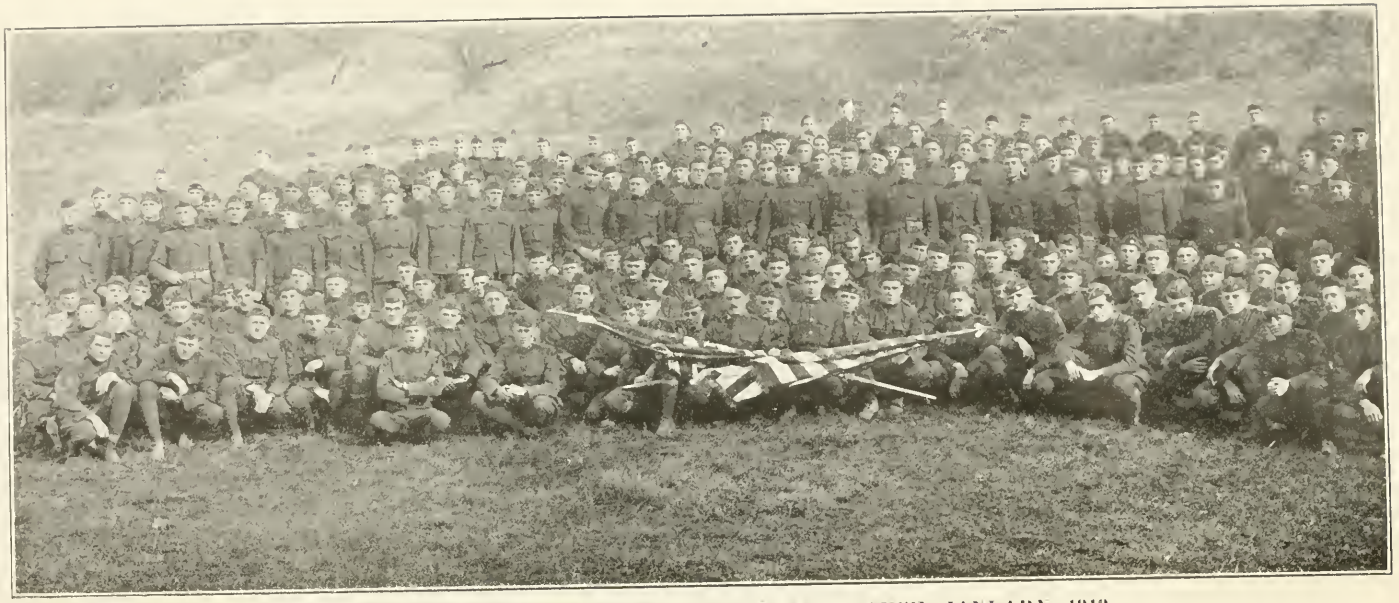


411TH TELEGRAPH BATTALION AT FRAVAUX, FRANCE, JANUARY, 1919

Only picture of Battalion as a whole outfit taken during stay in A. E. F. or after leaving Monterey. Note Battalion standard and colors.

MEMORIES

OF THE

"411TH"

TELEGRAPH BATTALION

IN THE WORLD WAR HERE
AND
"OVER THERE"

MOBILIZED at Presidio of Monterey, California, June 29, 1917. Left San Francisco, California, via Panama Canal on U. S. Steamship Great Northern January 24, 1918. Left New York on U. S. Steamship Covington for France February 18, 1918. Arrived Brest, France, March 4, 1918. Left Brest, France, for United States on U. S. Steamship Charleston April 10, 1919, arriving New York April 20, 1919. Demobilized at Presidio of San Francisco and Camp Lewis, Washington, May 8th to 12th, 1919.

Information, pictures, maps and personal experiences prepared and gathered with the assistance of members of the Battalion.

Compiled and edited by C. H. MOORE.

PRINTED BY
A. CARLISLE & CO. OF NEVADA
RENO, NEVADA

DEDICATED

TO our dearly beloved departed comrades who made the supreme sacrifice in the service of their country.

V. BARKER: Killed in action by explosion of German "77" shell October 25, 1918, while engaged in building telephone line near Very, France, during Meuse-Argonne offensive. Buried in cemetery near Cheppy, France, by his comrades. Later body was removed to military cemetery near Romagne, France.

F. R. EMORY: Ill on board U. S. Steamship Great Northern from San Francisco to Panama. Left in hospital at Panama, February 2, 1918, and died a few days later. Body removed to Spokane, Washington, and buried with full military honors.

ERNEST P. IRISH: Sprained ankle during last days of Meuse-Argonne just before Armistice. Sent to Hospital and then evacuated to United States. While on board U. S. Steamship Maui returning to United States he was suddenly stricken with pneumonia, dying on January 24, 1919. Buried in Cleveland, Ohio, with military honors.

JOHN S. SLATER: Member of Medical Corps Detachment. Taken ill while Battalion was at Brest, France; left there in Hospital and died March 14, 1918. Buried in Military Cemetery, Brest, France.

B. T. WILEY: Was stricken with "flu" while on special duty in Paris, France, February, 1919. Died few days later. Buried in Military Cemetery at Suresness, near Paris.

NOTE: Sergeant Singleton of the 319th Field Signal Battalion was killed at same time as Barker. He was attached to our organization for duty, and his loss was as keenly felt as though he had actually been one of our own men.

2045633

FOREWORD

IN passing along to my old comrades and friends a record of the achievements of the "411th," the writer wishes to take the opportunity of thanking each and every man who has so ably assisted in the furnishing of pictures, preparation of data, maps, etc., and in the making of suggestions. All have helped to make the story possible; in fact, without this assistance the book could not have been published. It is not possible to mention the individual names of all those who have so ably helped, but each of you will know your efforts and work are most sincerely appreciated.

No attempt has been made in this story to record individual achievement; effort has rather been made to chronicle in narrative form the combined achievements of the Battalion as a whole. We had many "star players" in our outfit, but the real accomplishments which we were able to put over were the result of "team work."

There are many features in connection with publishing this story which the writer wishes might have been improved upon. However, the best possible results have been obtained after taking into consideration all of the difficulties.

If the following pages will help to recall in the years to come the friendships and comradeships formed during the period of our service for our Country, and be the cause of further cementing the friendly relationships formed by having served together, the writer will be most happy and feel that much good has been accomplished.

C. H. MOORE.

MEMORIES OF THE "411th"

BY ONE OF THEM
HELPED BY THE WHOLE OUTFIT

I

THE CALL TO ARMS

AFTER the United States declared war against Germany, April 6, 1917, every red blooded, patriotic American citizen began asking himself these questions: "In what branch of the service should I enlist?" "Where will it be best for men to enlist and be sent to France for active duty at the earliest possible date?" "Where should I enlist to best serve my country?" Added to these questions were many as to how families would be cared for during the absence of the bread winner; what would happen in case of death or disability, etc. All had felt instinctively for many months that our country must take her place with the allies in the fight for world liberty and democracy; however, now that war had actually been declared, just where and how was each individual to fit in and "do his bit?"

Very shortly after war had been declared The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company issued a Bulletin announcing that a Telegraph Battalion was to be organized, enrollment in which was to be composed entirely of employes. The Bulletin also announced that The Telephone Company would pay to individuals accepted by the Government for service in the proposed Battalion the difference between their pay at time of entering service and the government pay, for a period of at least one year. Applications for enlistment were sent to all portions of the Company's territory, comprising the States of California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington and part of Idaho. The question as to "where to enlist" for men in the telephone and telegraph service was immediately answered by this plan, as

it not only offered a field where the technical ability and knowledge of telephone and telegraph men could be best utilized in serving their country, but also presented the opportunity of becoming affiliated with an organization composed of men who had been trained to think along the same lines, thus at once establishing a bond of fellowship and comradeship. The extremely generous proposal of The Telephone Company to pay the difference in wages for a period of one year also enabled many older men who would not have been subject to draft, and who had families, to enter the service at once, thus giving to their country the benefit of older experience which otherwise might have been deferred until provision for their dependents could have been made. The answer to the call for enlistments was immediate and spontaneous, resulting in nearly one thousand applications. As only one Battalion consisting of approximately two hundred fifteen enlisted men and ten officers was to be organized at that time, it became necessary to select those who were to go. These selections were made with two principal objects in view: to send those best qualified and retain those who were most necessary to maintain telephone service at home. Many had to be disappointed and to be "good soldiers" by remaining behind to perform the highly important work which it was apparent would have to be done in civilian capacities. The writer, in passing, wishes to remark upon the splendid spirit and sportsmanship shown by those men who were thus deprived of a distinct advantage to serve, but who remained on the job or later again volunteered to serve their country under less initial advantages.

During the month of May and first half of June, 1917, the fortunate men who had been selected to serve in the Battalion were busy with physical examinations, ascertaining what they should and should not take to training camp with them, arranging their home and personal affairs for an extended absence, and anxiously awaiting "the call."

In the organization of the Battalion practically all the men of Company D came from the Central and Southern Divisions in California and Nevada; Company E from Northern and In-

land Divisions in Oregon, Washington and Idaho: Headquarters and Supply Detachments, scattered.

Under date of June 21, 1917, the following extract from Special Order No. 135 was issued from Headquarters Western Department, San Francisco, California:

Special Orders, No. 135
HEADQUARTERS WESTERN DEPARTMENT
San Francisco, Cal., June 21, 1917.

Extract

* * * * * * * * *

15. In accordance with telegraphic instructions of the 19th instant from the War Department, the Eighth Telegraph Battalion, Signal Reserve Corps, consisting of the officers and enlisted men hereinafter named, is called into active service. Each officer and enlisted man named will proceed to the Presidio of Monterey, California, to arrive not later than the 29th instant and report to the commanding officer for station and duty.

OFFICERS:

Major Augustus H. Griswold.
Captain Charles H. Moore.
Captain William C. Barbour.
First Lieutenant Donald W. Scott.
First Lieutenant William H. Curran.
First Lieutenant John T. Quinn.
First Lieutenant William B. Fairbanks.
First Lieutenant George R. O. Rutherfurd.
First Lieutenant Allen J. Calloway.

ENLISTED MEN:

Master Signal Electricians.

John A. Dolan and Elmer L. Garrett, Company D.
Frank P. Henry and Shirley M. Treen, Company E.

Sergeants First Class.

Julian Elliott, Headquarters Detachment.

Christopher S. Barker, Alton B. Coates, Ariel C. Harris, Joseph A. Longeran, Arthur Lovell, Harry J. McGrew and Leigh R. Shelton, Company D.

Albert L. Beisell, Cecil A. Boyle, David W. Evans, Charles E. Jordan, Daniel H. McNulty, John B. Patterson and Aubrey A. Porter, Company E.

Sergeants

Wallace W. True, Supply Detachment.

Charles T. Abbott, Lewis A. Blair, Albert R. Blue, Thomas M. Burns, Emmett J. Graham, Alfred H. Hons, Ferdinand H. Schuchterman; John A. Stockman, Edward B. Tustin, William M. Wells and Howard P. Worthington, Company D.

Orrin W. Bailey, Albert W. Brant, Albert B. Campbell, Charles F.

Cole, Ernest A. Hutchins, George E. McConaughy, William F. McDonald, Edward A. Miller, Melvin W. Rutledge and Benedict T. Wiley, Company E.

Corporals.

Paul P. Boggs, George H. Browne, James A. Chamberlin, Herbert M. Coles, Rolland J. Cook, James L. Davis, Herbert N. Fairbanks, George G. Gillett, Bartholomew C. Lally, Jr., Frederick H. Landis, Arthur K. MacNamara, Warren C. Merrill, Louis W. Morris, Fred J. Reger, Charles A. Robb, George C. Thompson and Louis J. Warde, Company D.

Richard M. Barrett, Lawrence W. Brainard, Elton Connaway, Walter D. Davis, Charles R. Gould, Walter L. Kuhn, Don J. Lundy, Chester U. Maderia, Percy J. Patterson, George A. Radford, Roscoe C. Riley, Arno W. Schussman, Bert B. Smith, Newman K. Staggs, Carl L. Stier, Edwin S. Thomas and John C. Williams, Company E.

Privtes First Class

Grant P. Du Bois, Harold W. Northrup and Daniel D. Woodward, Supply Detachment.

Albert S. Adams, Roy A. Agard, Alfred Anderson, Charles B. Atkinson, Bruce Bacon, Voltaine Barker, Jacob V. Bechtold, Albert E. Bevan, Henry E. Biedebach, James H. Blessing, Con H. Cady, John A. Carlson, Daniel F. Donahue, Frank R. Emory, Jesse B. Fisher, Clarence H. Foote, Henry J. Graham, Leslie L. Gray, John W. Hanson, Hugh L. Hickey, William F. Huff, Jeremiah L. Hurley, John B. Johnson, Fred W. Kruse, Augustus L. Kurtz, William A. Labeau, Ralph W. Laverty, Karl C. Manny, Hector C. McDonald, Joseph Mendelson, John Nelson, Joseph B. O'Neil, Harold Pierce, Charles H. Rochford, Francis M. Saunders, Eugene M. Sawyer, Harrie Snelling, James R. Thomas, John J. Veazy, Herman C. Vehslage, Ralph E. Wagner, Charles Warner, Robert E. Williams, Virgil W. Wiswell, Harold B. Woolsey and Robert C. Younger, Company D.

Arthur H. Bachelor, George R. Bennett, Hal R. Borne, Leslie Brakel, Alphonse J. Campbell, Lester W. Campbell, Harry V. Coe, Ernest T. Collins, George S. Driscoll, Hilmer R. Eggan, Glen A. Elkins, Thomas A. Ellis, James A. Frace, Lloyd Freeman, William E. Gaskell, Fred A. Gio, Herrman H. Hall, Guy M. Harris, William J. Hoffer, Floyd L. Hunter, Daniel L. Ijams, William E. Johnson, Charles O. Larson, Walter L. Larson, John H. Lee, Ralph W. Lindsay, John Lynch, Raymond K. Maynard, Jr., Leo McArtor, Clyde D. McCall, Albert C. Mercier, William D. Montanye, Goldwin F. Moon, George E. Myers, Roy Neighbor, Fred Nelson, Jesse Nooney, Hans Olsen, Richard W. Prince, Carl D. Rolph, Charles L. Rose, Harold J. Sherrett, Frank C. Smith, Harry J. Smith, Ira M. Stamps, Everett E. Swim, John C. Taylor, Thomas L. Thacteher, Clyde L. Tuel, Harry E. Warner, Elmo B. Weaver, Thomas T. Webb, Leslie L. Weimar and Franklyn H. Woodward, Company E.

Privates

Ernest T. Becker, Walter D. Vecchio and Thomas E. Knox, Headquarters DLetachment.

Thomas J. Bays, Leonard L. Beardslee, Robert H. Blair, Walter A. Davis, Harry H. Glass, Charles E. Guenther, Alexander C. Krater, Edward S. Lynch, Fred J. Ortner, Charlie E. Stradley, Frank W. Torrey and Lyle H. Wheeler, Company D.

Richard B. Baird, Duncan A. Cooper, Neal Davidson, La Von E. Gottfried, Lewis G. Hunter, Clark B. Huston, Ernest L. Lathan, Edwin M. Meyer, Frederick T. Phillips, Earl A. Ryder and Ralph Underwood, Company E.

The Quartermaster Corps will furnish the necessary transportation and pay to such of the enlisted men as may be entitled thereto commutation of rations as provided by paragraph 1228, Army Regulations, it being impracticable for them to carry rations of any kind.

The travel directed is necessary in the military service.

* * * * * * * * * *

By Command of Major General Liggett:

H. H. WHITNEY,
Lieutenant Colonel, Adjutant General,
Department Adjutant

Pursuant to the foregoing order the various units reported to the Presidio of Monterey, California, on June 29, 1917.

The Battalion was practically the first organization to be called into active service as an organization in the Western Department, and at that time only small troop movements to training camps were being made. As the movement involved men traveling from practically every part of the Pacific Coast States (including Nevada and Idaho) a great deal of interest was taken by the public along the route and the press widely commented upon the call of the organization, predicting early overseas duty.

GUARD HOUSE, MONTEREY

1. Presidio of Monterey
2. Gus Larson learns to carry a pack.
3. Our flag pole.
4. New tick straw.
5. Our mascot "Lucky."

II

OUR TRAINING CAMP

THE selection of the Presidio of Monterey as the training camp for the Pacific Coast Battalion was most fortunate. Situated on a small elevation, with gravelly soil, good water and drainage, it was an ideal camp site. Founded in 1770, there is no other place in the State of California about which there centers so many points of historical interest, as the Presidio of Monterey and its environs. From the earliest period in the State's History the most important political and historical events have taken place in the vicinity of Monterey. Almost within a stone's throw of the spot where Commodore John D. Sloat, Commander of the Pacific Squadron, on July 7, 1846, first raised the Stars and Stripes in California, was located the training place of our Battalion. Here we were destined to spend many hours, days, weeks and months of hard work, mingled with the sadness and the joys of a new and strange life. But in the years to come we are bound to look back upon our experiences there and say "am glad they sent us to Monterey." Its glorious climate, continuous sunshine and scenery, unrivalled anywhere in the world, made our enforced stay much easier to endure than if we had been located at some of the other training camps where we would have had to contend with the summer heat or rigors of winter. During nearly a seven months' training period not a scheduled formation had to be omitted on account of climatic conditions.

And then, too, must be recalled the many opportunities for recreation. For a radius of ten miles from our headquarters might be had almost every form of outdoor sports. The world famous Hotel Del Monte grounds was only a couple of miles away. Tourists spend thousands upon thousands of dollars every year to visit this justly famous resort; we enjoyed all of its pleasures and facilities and the management gladly welcomed us at all times. Nearby was the golf course, the polo

grounds, the race track, the beautiful drives and the many other natural attractions which all combined make this resort one of the most famous in America.

Who in our organization will ever forget the world-famous "Seventeen Mile Drive," "Del Monte Forest," "Pebble Beach Lodge," the Cypress Trees and all of the other delightful creations which the hand of God and man have combined to make the most beautiful in all the world.

Nowhere else in all the Universe has the Creator so lavishly endowed human kind with natural beauties than in the Monterey Country. Here truly is the "Riviera" of America. It was the writer's good fortune, as well as other members of our organization, to bask in the sunshine of France on the shores of the Mediterranean, and to travel over the boulevards of Nice and its environs, and he always said with pride and pleasure in his heart that our own dear Monterey is just as beautiful, its blending of colors just as marvelous and its rare combination of mountain, forest and ocean scenery just as magnificent.

Cupid was a busy little boy about the time the 411th was called into service, as attested by the six new bridegrooms pictured above.

III

MAKING SOLDIERS

VERY few men in the organization had ever had any previous military training and knew very little as to what was expected of them. Composed as it was, however, of telephone and telegraph men who had been accustomed to adapting themselves to varying conditions in civilian life, it was not long after arrival at Camp before everyone fell into the spirit of the new life. Each man found his place to sleep, had his bed sack filled, blankets issued and before being in camp beyond one meal time, learned to ask the question "when do we eat?"

We were most fortunate in being assigned to well constructed barracks with large squad rooms. These barracks were provided with kitchens in the extreme rear, immediately adjoining a large dining room, or as we soon learned to call it, "mess hall." About the very first thing we learned after reaching camp was that we were expected to "clean up." Kitchens, mess halls, squad rooms and everything about camp had to be scrubbed. Cleanliness, we were to learn, was to be one of the things to be always kept in mind. A mere mention of the many ludicrous sights in and about camp those first few days will surely recall a chain of comical circumstances. Men who had been used to living a rather free and easy life (having what they wished when they wanted it) were learning to peel potatoes, wait on table, police company streets, make their own beds and do the hundred and one things which they all later found easy in the daily grind of being a soldier. However, there was a big willingness to learn on the part of all; the "regulars" in and about the camp found out that our crowd were "regular fellows," and were willing to give us pointers, although many stories of the gullibility of our recruits for the first few days were circulated in camp.

On July 4th, five days after reaching camp, a "Big Feed" was put on by the Mess Sergeants and Cooks, and thus was es-

V. H. GRISWOLD

Major Griswold was first Commanding Officer of the 411th. Shortly after arrival in France, March, 1918, he was transferred from organization to staff of General Russel at Tours and made Director of the Telephone and Telegraph Department. He was in charge of the vast construction and maintenance of the net work of lines of communication in the SOS, and much of the success in carrying out the plan was due to his tireless, efficient efforts and ability.

Promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel in October, 1918. Served on Signal Corps Board at Paris after Armistice, which had charge of the disposition of the plant and supplies of the Signal Corps in the A. E. F.

tablished that never-ending rivalry between the messes of the two companies as to which one could turn out the best grub. This July 4th feed was a dandy, so much so that some of our early visitors from out of town have never yet been convinced that soldiers did not live on the fat of the land. At least they were sure the soldiers of the 411th so fared.

It was at once evident that Uncle Sam expected the process of making soldiers out of green civilians to begin at once.

No troops of moment had been station at Presidio of Monterey for a period of some three years, with the result that company streets, parade grounds and the premises generally had been neglected through lack of man power to care for them. Responsibility for policing of streets, barracks, etc., was at once established, and in a very few days everything was organized and running quite smoothly. The parade ground which was covered with a rank growth of grass and tangled tar weeds presented some serious trouble for a few days, but someone dug up old scythes and some of the heavy huskies from the outfit who had learned in an earlier day how to wield them, got busy, which, together with continual tramping for several hours a day, soon solved the problem. In the meantime, a regular schedule of calesthenics, drill periods, classes in telephone and telegraph, wig-wag, semaphore and other classes of study in signal corps work had been established. Every officer and soldier in the organization was kept busy from five A. M. o'clock, reveille, until six P. M., retreat, and we all soon realized that learning to be a soldier wasn't going to be any pink tea.

CAPTAIN DANVERS
One of our Instructors at Monterey. Later promoted to Major commanding 317th Field Signal Battalion.

1. First roll call.
2. "Pigeon Cole."
3. Company E arriving.
4. Awkward squad.
5. Before they had an army haircut.

Recruited from the Pacific Coast States, where much living out of doors is natural, and representing a rather selected athletic group of men, there is no boast in stating that our men arrived at the Presidio of Monterey in better physical condition than any similar number of men who might have been gathered together any place. All were mentally alert and eager "to go." Unfortunately, army shoes and uniforms were not immediately available and training for the first couple of weeks had to be carried on with men clad in all manner of raiment. Footgear varied in style from the fashionable clerk's peaked toed evening shoes to the hob-nailed hiking boots of the mountaineer. Result: After two or three hours of stiff setting-up exercises and several hours drill in the school of the soldier, men discovered they had muscles which they had long forgotten existed; that "hitting the weed" had hit their wind, and that waist lines which seemed good enough in "civies" were painfully evident at the command "right dress." By careful foot inspection, by plentiful use of iodine and other medicants at the Camp Hospital, the aches were relieved and the sting of the blisters grew less.

And then the never-to-be-forgotten day arrived when real uniforms were issued to all, and much abused feet were comfortably encased in army shoes. Of course, all did not receive a beautiful fit at first: as one wag put it—"Lally was given a suit big enough for a ten year old boy, while "Red" Ward was given a suit big enough for a Baby Jumbo." And then, too, the first suits were light khaki. We all thought we were going to receive regular "OD's" and some of the fellows referred to the light khaki as "Boy Scout outfits." But, nevertheless, they were uniforms and talk about debutants! No group of Southern belles ever gave their wardrobes more attention than these soldirs did those first uniforms until they were properly fitted. Monterey tailors did a thriving business, altering, pressing and fitting. Men who, in civilian life, only gave ordinary attention to dress, suddenly became Beau Brummels in military attire.

Shortly after our arrival a Signal Corps Officers' Training School was started at Monterey. Our officers also attended

CAPTAIN R. P. WHEAT

One of our Instructors at Monterey. Later promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel and appointed Chif Signal Officer, Paris District, where many of former 411th men served under him.

these classes, thus increasing their work and responsibilities. This training school caused more activity in the Post, and we all began to appreciate we were really in the army. The hour of reveille was 5:30 A. M. and we used to wonder as we stood in line rubbing our eyes and finishing dressing why it was that the Army persisted in doing calisthenics in the dark instead of waiting for daylight to come. But after all, those early morning setting-up exercises in the crisp, foggy air of the early day, probably did more than anything else to harden us and get us

ready for the strenuous work of the future. Immediately after calisthenics mess call for breakfast was sounded and there was a mad rush to see who would get to the head of the line. The food disappeared like magic and no matter how hard the cooks and mess sergeants tried, there was always a holler for more. After breakfast we had to hustle to police up our bunks, squad rooms, kitchens, mess halls, lavatories, company streets, for the morning inspection of the Company Commanders. We used to think that Captains Moore and Barbour could see and find more things to find fault with than any two men in the world, but we soon learned that everything had to be spick and span in order to get by the inspection, and doing it well soon became a matter of habit. Sick call was the next thing on the program, and a procession formed for the purpose of putting over an alibi of some kind on the "top kick" in order to walk across the parade ground to the hospital and thus get out of the drill period. Those who were not successful formed on the parade ground for an hour and a half of close order drill. Following this there were classes in Signal Corps work which kept us busy up to noon mess.

After lunch we had a short rest period in which we had nothing to do but clean up our equipment, shave, wash clothes, etc. Then the afternoon was taken up in semaphore, wig-wag, heliograph and buzzer practice.

After we had been outfitted with uniforms and shoes, the officers felt that it would be a good stunt to break us in on guard duty. Captain Wheat and Captain Danvers, our instructors, gave us the preliminary instructions and on the morning of July 25th, we assembled our first guard with Capt. Moore as Officer of the Day and Tommy Burns as Sergeant of the Guard. Our first tour of guard duty passed off without unusual incident, except Captain Wheat endeavoring to relieve the guard on post No. 1 of his gun, but the guard refused to give up his gun in spite of the assurance on Capt. Wheat's part that he should always obey a superior officer. The novelty of this duty, however, soon wore off and it became just a routine and when we found our names posted on the guard detail our complaints to the 1st Sergeant were frequent and vociferous.

The routine throughout the week was as outlined above, except that on Friday mornings we were called out at 7:15 and took a long hike throughout the surrounding country.

These hikes at first were merely in the nature of long walks, but as we became hardened to the work, we first marched with light packs and later with full packs. Many of these hikes took us through the beautiful scenic country in and about Monterey and we shortened the hike by singing songs, telling

MAJOR D. P. FULLERTON

General Superintendent of Plant, The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company. It was through his untiring efforts, ably assisted by Mr. Patton and others on his staff, that the 411th was recruited from Pacific Coast employes.

stories, etc. Upon our return from these hikes, careful inspection was made by the officers as to the condition of our feet, and on several of the very warm afternoons following the hikes, we took a course of instruction in swimming at the Del Monte Plunge.

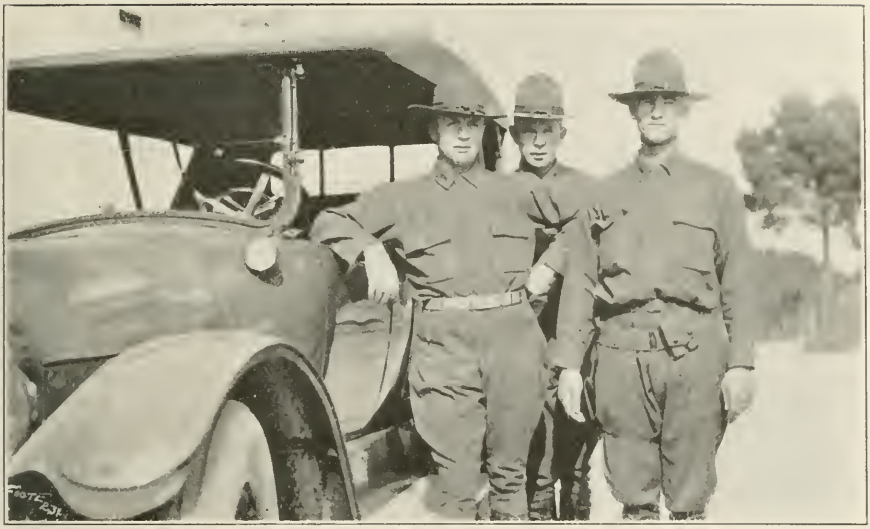
On Saturday morning immediately following reveille, the beds were taken out on the porches, squad rooms scrubbed, shelves re-arranged and our equipment given a thorough going over, preliminary to our regular weekly inspection, which was held at 9:00 A. M. If we thought the morning inspections were hard to get by on, we soon learned the weekly ones were just six times worse: the Battalion Commander, and often the Post Commander, had even our sharp-eyed Captains beaten. Unless everything was spic and span it had to be done over again.

Telegraph classes were formed at this time and about 25 men from each Company were selected to take up the study of telegraphy. These classes were separated into different sections, depending upon the ability of the men to recieve 2, 8, 10 or 15 words per minute. After having studied the Morse code for about one month and having become rather expert in the use of it, advice was received from the War Department that only Continental Code would be used. This was rather a setback for the class, but they studied hard and it was not long before the sound of the Continental code could be heard every morning from 10:30 to noon as if a dispatcher's office was going at full tilt.

A recital of our experiences during the training camp period would not be complete without some mention of the officers in command who assisted us so materially during our stay in the Presidio of Monterey.

When we first reported at Monterey, Captain Nolan was the Commanding Officer. We can always look back with feelings of kindness toward him. He helped our officers through many difficulties during the early days in camp, and it was through his co-operation and courtesy that we secured many things in the way of equipment, conveniences, etc., which might not have been forthcoming had the man occupying his command not been so anxious for us to get started off right.

1. Pealing "spuds."
2. Cooks and Mess Sergeants "Big Feed, July 4, 1917.
3. "Privates delight." Sergeants doing K. P.
4. Near Pebble Beach.

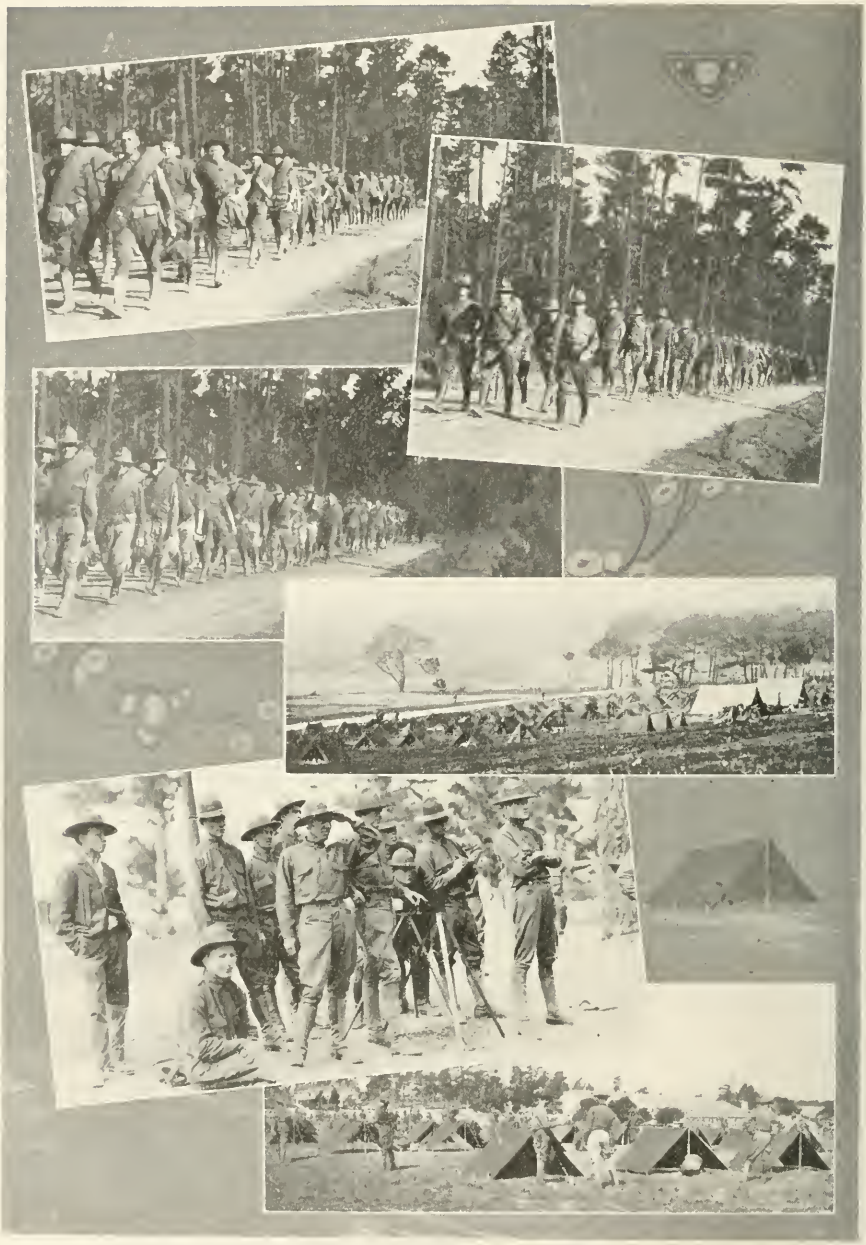


THREE "WORKING CAPTAINS"

Many of us had the pleasure of meeting him many months afterward during the Argonne, at which time he had been promoted to a Lieutenant-Colonel. He later served as Provost-Marshall at Paris.

Captain Nolan was succeeded by Col. J. B. Allison. The writer finds himself at a loss for words to express the high esteem in which Colonel Allison was held by every officer and man of our organization. He was a strict disciplinarian, but a man who was absolutely fair and impartial in the administration of the Post. Everyone soon learned that he was there for the purpose of making soldiers out of recruits, and very few escaped his watchful eye if they did not toe the mark. But he was a natural leader among men, knew the Army game from A to Z, and every mother's son in camp soon learned to revere him and to have a sincere appreciation of his ability and interest in the welfare of all. Every one of us has always regretted that Col. Allison did not reach Europe for active duty.

Captain Donald B. Sanger was one of the first officers with whom many of our men came in contact, as he had been very active in the recruiting of our Battalion in San Francisco. He was wont to refer to us as "My Battalion," and we just as



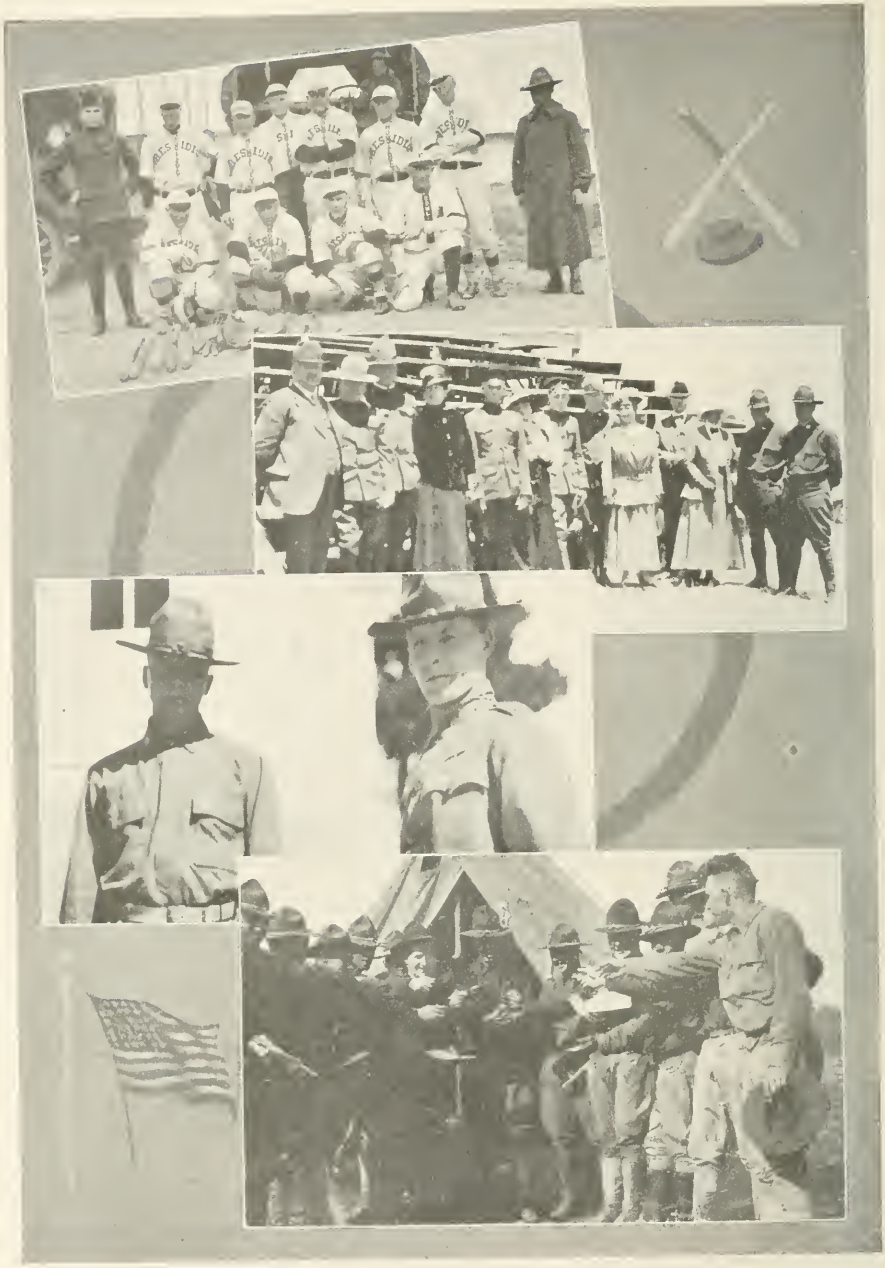
1, 2, 3. On the hike in and about "17 mile drive" Monterey.
4. Camp Pebble Beach.
5. Learning the heliograph.
6. Practicing on the "pup tents."

affectionately called him "Our Captain." He was always ready and willing to help us out and was one of our best friends always. We had the pleasure of meeting him later in France, at which time he had been promoted to a Lieutenant-Colonel and was on the staff of the Chief Signal Officer of the Advance Section at Chaumont.

Captain McEntee (later Lieutenant-Colonel) was another one of the instructors at Monterey who took a great deal of interest and assisted us to make the grade during our primary days of soldiering. One of the saddest occurrences during our stay was the painful accident which Captain McEntee had in colliding with one of our automobiles. No doubt the injury which he sustained greatly delayed his progress in being sent to France. He was an officer who was always alive with new ideas, and some of the best suggestions received by us in the handling of our work came from him.

And then of course we must think of Captains Danvers and Wheat whenever we think at all of our training camp days. We will always smile when we think back and remember the scraps they used to have over their respective Companies, "D" and "E," and the controversies thereby engendered throughout both companies. They were both most efficient and sincere in their desire to make the Company which each was handling the best, and there is no doubt that their tireless efforts had much to do with the success with which we accomplished our work. They were both personally interested in helping the men and long afterward when we met them both in France it seemed good to meet old friends.

The weeks pass quickly by and we find our Battalion rapidly developing from a band of raw recruits into a well disciplined, erect of carriage, tan skinned and rugged appearing organization of soldiers. The summer of 1917 passed quickly and during all the varying hardships of the training period, there was much satisfaction to be had from the knowledge that soon the time would arrive when we would be on our way overseas and have a chance at regular work in Europe. The organization had been inspected many times and pronounced "fit" for immediate duty abroad. President Theodore N. Vail,



1. Baseball team.
2. Visitors after ball game.
3. Captains Danver and Sanger.
4. "Give me my mail."

of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, together with President George E. McFarland of The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company and other prominent civilians and army officers visited Monterey on September 24, 1917, reviewed the Battalion and complimented them highly on their military showing and the splendid physical appearance of the personnel. In October, General Squier, Chief Signal Officer of the U. S. Army, visited us for the purpose of a review and inspection. He was most enthusiastic over our showing. Surely now there would be no further delay. However, the heavy troop movements to training camps and other movements of war materials were taxing the transportation facilities of the country, and we were on the wrong coast. Thanksgiving came and then the Holidays passed. Still the Battalion was engaged in training and nearing the completion of a period of seven months.

Upon our return from Thanksgiving leaves, we found a long and impressive line of trucks waiting to be broken in. Truck drivers were assigned and we were given the opportunity to view the surrounding country from the top of truck seats instead of hiking. The arrival of these trucks made us sure that we were about to leave. But again it was a false rumor and we again settled down to squads right and squads left. We were to experience many anxious days of waiting while in the Army, but the last two months at Monterey were absolutely the hardest and most tiresome days. We felt that we had had enough training and were raring to go, especially as news bulletins began to pour in during the Fall of 1917, telling of the Americans' active participation in affairs on the other side of the Atlantic.

But as one of our wits put it: "Uncle Sam cannot much longer deprive himself of having the 411th help out in active duty overseas," and finally, on January 22, 1918, came the glad tidings ordering us to San Francisco for embarkation.

Monterey had, in the seven months' training period, become just like home to the men of the Battalion—married men had moved their families to live there; many men had married since coming, many more were on the point of proposing and all had

1. President McFarland, General Manager Nowell and Mr. Scott.
2. Mr. Vail, Maj. Fullerton and Mr. Scott.
3. Watching the review.
4. Col. Allison tells them to "step out."
5. "Close up" of Mr. Vail.

made many friends. Preparations for departure were hastily made, tearful good-byes said and on January 22, 1918, the "411th" started on the first leg of their journey overseas. A detail of thirty-nine soldiers and two officers proceeded overland to Hoboken, acting as convoy for the complete motor vehicle and technical equipment of a Telegraph Battalion.

The trip from Monterey to San Francisco was a pleasant one, although there were many sad hearts and tearful eyes over leaving dear ones behind in our Monterey homeland. We were glad in the knowledge that at last we were on our way "over there." A new phase of our life in the service was upon us; our eyes had a new gleam, our carriage was a little more erect, our step more firm and our consciousness more keyed up to the advent of emerging from the status of being in training camp to the event of being headed toward "active service."

The rocky shores, in and about the Bay of Monterey, provided a wonderful place for our soldiers to while away their playtime hours.

IV

ON OUR WAY VIA PANAMA CANAL

UPON arrival of our special train in San Francisco we were somewhat surprised to be greeted by many of our friends and acquaintances who had in some way gotten a "tip" on our movement, although it was presumed to be very secret. The train was switched down past the Ferry Building and around the belt line railway to the Fort Mason dock. At every crossing where the train stopped our friends in someway contrived to catch up and wave us greetings. They were joined soon by many passers by, who were anxious to catch a glimpse of the organization "bound for the front," as they soon began calling to us.

Shortly after arrival at Fort Mason orders were issued to board the Steamship "Great Northern" which had just been converted into an Army Transport at the Bremerton Navy Yards and brought to San Francisco for the purpose of taking Naval Reserves and our outfit to an Atlantic Port via the Panama Canal. The next day everyone busied themselves becoming acquainted with the ship, learning location of berthing spaces and generally preparing for a long sea voyage, as it was whispered about that we would remain on the Great Northern until arrival in France.

That night was the last opportunity we had of being on shore, and many "forgot" to notice the guard, wandering up to the nearby suburbs for a last peep at dear old San Francisco town. The writer well remembers that Captain Barbour and himself decided it would be well to do a little "rounding up," and it was well that they did so, as otherwise some of our men might have forgotten the lateness of the hour and found difficulty in getting back past the guard.

The next morning a detail of three officers and ten soldiers boarded a large tug boat and went to Angel Island; little did the members of that detail realize the nature of the trip as no

information had been issued concerning it. Imagine their surprise upon arrival at Angel Island Dock to find four hundred thirty-five German alien prisoners of war. All had looked forward to a most delightful ocean voyage through the Panama Canal, but here we were face to face with several hundred Germans who were to be guarded and convoyed to an Atlantic port. All day was consumed in loading the Germans, searching their baggage for possible infernal machines, weapons, etc., and placing them in quarters aboard. Anchor was lifted at five-thirty P. M. Thursday, January 24, 1918, and just as dusk was gathering, the ship poked her nose through Golden Gate out into the Pacific. There were many on deck, straining their eyes for a last look at some familiar land-mark, and then as daylight faded into darkness, men with weary heads and aching hearts strove to keep back the tears as they wandered here and there restlessly about the ship. Loved ones were being left behind; husbands, brothers and sweethearts were on their way to the place of mystery "over there." The writer did not fully appreciate the keenness of the feeling in most of the men's hearts that evening until many months afterward. Having been a wanderer for many years, himself, and not having told his mother of his entry into the service, he had none of the family reasons which made the separation so sad. But the majority of the men in the organization were leaving their families for an appreciable period for the first time—perhaps they would never see them again. The seriousness of their departure from Western shores was being fully realized, and when darkness closed about the ship that night, men went about their duties and finally to their berthing spaces with sadness in their hearts and a prayer that they might be safely returned to their loved ones.

When we learned that we were to go via the Panama Canal, we were greatly elated and thought we had a most wonderful trip ahead of us. And so it would have been, had it not been for our cargo of human freight, over which we were specially charged with close surveillance. We were compelled to stand twenty-four hour guard duty, which took every man and officer in the organization. The German prisoners had to be

guarded while they slept, while they ate and while they took their recreation. The feeding accommodations on the ship were not good, and all in all, we had a very disagreeable and unpleasant task. This was practically the first movement of German prisoners in any considerable numbers, and great care was being exercised by the Army and Navy to guard against any treacherous act on their part. We had several suspicious occurrences, one causing considerable uneasiness. Smoke was discovered one day issuing in considerable volume in the neighborhood of the fuel reservoirs. It was believed that some of the Germans had had something to do with it, but no harm came of it. A still closer vigilance was maintained, thus increasing our burdens and discomforts.

The trip to Panama was made in faster time than it had ever been made previously—arriving there at 2 P. M. January 31, 1918. Some very rough weather was encountered and many of the men who were making practically their first ocean voyage, were very seasick. The weather in the tropics was extremely hot and this added greatly to our discomforts. The nights were practically as hot as the days, and about the only place where one could sleep with any degree of comfort was up on deck.

Upon arrival at Panama a stop-over of a day and a half was made and the men given shore leave. This enabled all to have a good look at the historical old city, its surroundings, customs and people. It was indeed a very welcome respite from the dreary hours of guard duty for seven days and everybody had a rip-roaring good time. Nervous systems were over wrought, and the opportunity to indulge in a little liquid refreshment and join in some of the festivities of this tropical city was welcomed by everybody.

Here, however, occurred our very first sad experience. Frank R. Emory, private first class, Company D, had been ill since leaving Monterey. Upon reaching Panama it was decided by the ship's Surgeon that Emory was too ill to continue the journey and he was placed in the military hospital. All realized he was very ill; however, few thought he would not recover. Months afterwards when we reached France we learned he

only lived a few days. His body was returned to his home in Spokane, Washington, and was buried with full military honors.

Left Panama on the morning of February 2, 1918. All enjoyed passing through the Canal and marveled at the wonderful engineering achievements.

F. R. EMORY

Died at Panama early in February, 1918. Buried at Spokane, Washington, with full military honors. First man in 411th to give his life for his country.

We arrived Charleston, S. C., on the evening of February 6th. Here the German aliens were unloaded. Everyone heaved a sigh of relief upon their departure from the ship and the Battalion's responsibility ceased. The writer will never forget the comment of one of our wits when he saw the Germans turned over to four soldiers who marched them away; "Well, I'll be damned; it took 220 of us to guard them on water where they couldn't get away, and now they turn them over to four buck privates."

Left Charleston February 7th, arriving New York morning of the 9th. Disembarked "Great Northern" morning of the 10th at Hoboken and arrived Camp Merritt about 3:30 in the afternoon. Upon reaching Camp we were greeted by our old comrades of the overland motor equipment detachment who had arrived some ten days before.

The stay at Camp Merritt was occupied in refitting the organization with clothing and other necessary equipment for overseas duty. Many inspections were necessary, and all were in constant dread of something happening to prevent our early departure. There was an epidemic of contagious diseases, and a very alarming scare seized our Battalion when some thirty-five men were quarantined account of contact with a suspected case of diphtheria. Their confinement only lasted about forty-eight hours when it was decided they had not become infected. All were happy again, as it was rumored we were to embark Monday, February 18th; and then when this rumor became an order, measles broke out in a barracks where two sections of Company E had been quartered. They were quarantined and had to be left behind. Lieutenant Geo. R. O. Rutherfurd was detailed to remain with them and proceed at the earliest possible date overseas.

V

CROSSING THE ATLANTIC

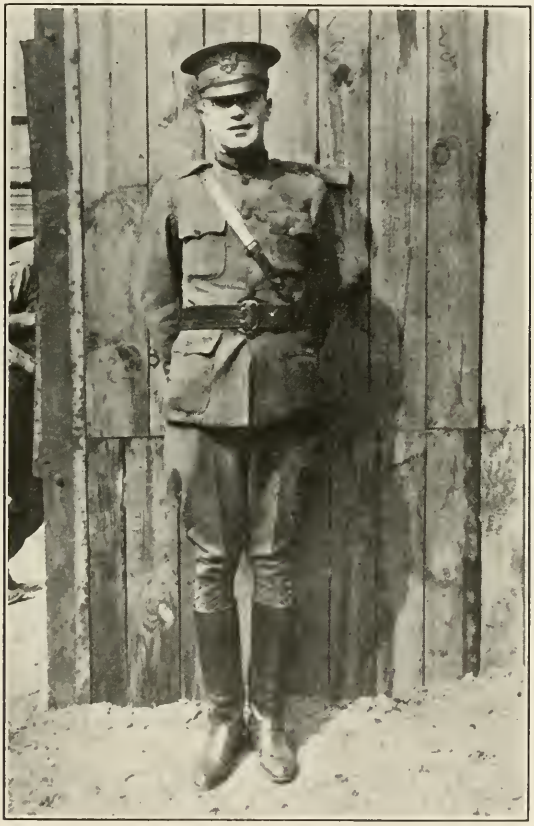
AT eleven o'clock on the night of February 18, 1918, our ship, the "Covington," quietly slipped away from the Hoboken Dock. The next morning we were at sea, and although everyone peered westward hoping for a last lingering look of our home land, only sky, water and ships of our convoy were visible. There were seven transports and one battleship cruiser in our convoy. At this particular period the danger of submarines was uppermost in everybody's mind, as the "Tuscania" had been torpedoed and sunk only a few days previously. Extraordinary precautions were taken; only a few blue lights were permitted after dark; men were not permitted to smoke on deck after dark; no debris was allowed to be thrown overboard; port holes painted black were never opened at night; heavy curtains hung before the doors leading to the deck, preventing any chance beam of light escaping. In other words, many little things of seeming unimportance became of much importance. All troops were required to "stand to" from just before dawn until full daylight and from twilight until full darkness. These two periods were considered the most dangerous for submarine attacks, and everybody had to be in their properly designated places, equipped with life preservers, ready to put off in life boats, rafts, etc., if it became necessary to abandon ship. The strain of this preparation and apprehension wore off in two or three days and the troops became accustomed to life aboard ship. While there were some discomforts in the way of overcrowded berthing spaces, only fair food and some sickness, little complaint was heard, and we were beginning to come in contact with that level-headed American philosophy which became characteristic of the A. E. F., and later so easily expressed by a shrug of the shoulders, extending of the hands and the French expression "Cest le Guerre."

About four P. M. Friday, March 1, 1918, a submarine alarm

W. C. BARBOUR

Captain Co. E. 411th. Transferred soon after arrival in France and in charge maintenance lines of communication SOS. Promoted to Major and assigned to command 403rd Telegraph Battalion, with which organization he had charge of the construction and maintenance of important network in the advance section SOS.

was given; something which appeared like a periscope was sighted on the port side of our ship, the "Covington." Immediate firing began from all of the ships in the convoy that could maneuver into position, depth bombs were dropped, and all the other well planned offensive and defensive action taken. Abandon ship alarm sounded and everyone was quickly at their designated places ready to take to the water if the ship were torpedoed. The excitement was quickly over, the "all clear"



JOHN T. QUINN

First Lieutenant Co. E; transferred to Battalion Adjutant at Monterey. Promoted to Captain and transferred from 411th. Went overseas with 405th Telegraph Battalion. Promoted to Major and assigned to command Field Signal Battalion during Argonne; later assigned to command 52nd Telegraph Battalion.

A. J. CALLOWAY

First Lieutenant, acting as Supply Officer 411th. Transferred after arrival in France to 52nd Telegraph Battalion, with which organization he had active service during Chateau-Thiery and Meuse-Argonne offensives.

signal given and all were happy it was not a submarine, but glad to at least have had the "thrill."

The next morning six submarine destroyers became our escort—later in the day the number increased to eleven. What a feeling of safety when these "ocean bloodhounds" became our protectors! Exclamations of gladness were heard on every side; one short, corpulent Lieutenant who had been wont to wear his life-preserver at all times, confided to the writer—"Well, I haven't been exactly afraid, but I feel safer now." It is quite probable that came near being the inner sentiment of every soul aboard ship.

The morning of March 4, 1918, found everyone as usual standing on deck, facing seaward and waiting for full daylight. Four of the transports in our convoy had left us the night before, going in the direction of St. Nazaire. As we went to breakfast the word was passed around that land would be in sight sometime that morning; immediately the front positions on the decks were at a premium, and all eyes were straining for that first glimpse of a foreign shore. When the lookout, from his position in the crow's-nest called out "land ahead" a mighty cheer rose up all over the ship; it meant the end of our long sea journey and our arrival in that land which we all had wondered if we were ever going to see. The sun came out in full strength and the convoy presented a beautiful sight as it steamed into the outer harbor of Brest, while the destroyers zig-zagged back and forth; a dirigible balloon overhead watched for subs; several hydro-planes darted across the skyline from one side of the Bay to the other and French submarines glided in and out. We saw many ships at anchor of every size and type, flying the flags of all the allied nations. We dropped anchor just outside the seawall of the inner harbor, the engines ceased their steady throb and we all experienced the pleasure of walking the deck without going through gymnastics to maintain our balance. The rest of the morning we spent on deck, studying the town and wondering when we would land. Our view was rather limited, but we could see the old walls which were built in Caesar's time, and many buildings which looked odd to us. Everything was built of stone, with slate roofs. In the afternoon

A. D. S. McCOY

Assigned to 411th just before departure as Medical Officer of our organization with rank of Captain. Dr. McCoy's services to organization will always be remembered and appreciated by all. His record in keeping the outfit well was particularly good. Promoted to Major in October, 1918, and transferred to Special Hospital Duty in January, 1919. Now in regular Army, stationed at Letterman Hospital, San Francisco.

the ship moved into the inner harbor—inside of the submarine nets. Now that we were so near shore, all wanted to land. When night came we were allowed to keep the lights burning and to take off our clothes, which latter privilege had been denied the four previous nights.

The next morning was foggy, and it rained most of the day. We had all heard of sunny France, and the rain just like the Pacific Coast was a surprise to some of us. Little did we know that the webfoots from Oregon and Washington would feel very much at home with the weather during the major portion of their stay in France.

American fashion, we had expected our ship to dock and unload just as easily as she had loaded, but we soon learned that although Brest has one of the best harbors in the World, there are no docking facilities. Ships must anchor in the stream and be unloaded by means of large tug boats and lighters. In the afternoon a detail of twenty-five men was sent ashore to unload and guard our baggage and equipment. Which one of this detail was the first man to set foot on French soil will never be known, as twenty-five men all claim the honor.

Type of French engine which pulled our train from Brest to Savenay.

VI

EARLY EXPERIENCES IN FRANCE

THE next morning it was still raining. At 10:30 we left the ship and were taken to the landing wharf aboard a small boat—"the Kingfisher." This boat was well known to many of us who had seen her engaged in traffic on San Francisco Bay for many years. When we landed on the dock we stopped long enough to relieve the guard detail and then started for "Pontonezan Barracks." It was on this march that we got our first glimpse of France, and we were all busy taking in the sights, the narrow streets, the funny little shops, and trying to decipher the signs over each one and wondering what they had to sell. The people and their clothes all came in for a share of our attention. The styles were all so different from what we have in our country; it was all extremerly interesting. The predominance of wooden shoes made us almost believe we were in Holland. When we neared the center of town we caught our first sight of a pretty French mademoiselle; when she gave us a pretty smile and waved her hand, it was with difficulty that Captain Moore kept us in line and going ahead. Then we passed out of town and on into a country road bordered by green fields, which after a march of about three miles brought us to the barracks—known as "Pontonezan." The barraeks were surrounded by a high stone wall and as we approached, they opened the gate to admit us, closing it again after we had all passed in. As some wit later remarked: "It was quite easy to march into these barracks, but very hard to get out." There was a large parade ground in the center where we halted and waited in the drizzling rain until quarters had been assigned. The parade ground was bordered by story and a half buildings, made of stone, with slate roofs, very steep and many little gables and dormer windows. Everything had the appearance of being very old, and when we were told that the buildings were used as barracks for Napoleon's troops, we could easily

believe it. The quarters assigned to us were on the second floor of one of these buildings, which in effect was really the attic. It had the appearance of being a very unwelcome home, with its bare (although whitewashed) walls, small windows, low roof, absence of stoves, furnishings, etc. For beds, each man had two little trestles and three nice hard boards. On these blankets were placed—without mattresses. Various devices were tried to make these boards soft but without avail. Clothes lines were put up and material for shelves obtained. In the meantime the cooks were busy setting up field ranges in the company streets, and when mess call finally sounded it was a hungry crew which fell into line as there had been nothing to eat since coffee and bread aboard ship in the morning. And then came our first night in France. As darkness came on search was made for the switch to turn on the electric lights, but there wasn't any, and when it came to clustering around a camp fire, it was also absent. But some candles were located, everybody put on their overcoats and curled up in blankets on the aforesaid boards. Before morning all realized how much difference a mattress makes to a bed.

The next morning was spent in washing clothes and generally cleaning up. In the afternoon arrangements were made to initiate all into the mysteries of taking a bath under the conditions then prevailing. It was the first bath since leaving Camp Merritt. The men were marched to the bath house in groups of twenty in charge of an officer, lined up on one side of the room, where they undressed. Two men got under each shower and waited for the water to be turned on; then a whistle blew; all prepared for the shock and a trickle of water descended. At no time during the whole operation could it really be called a stream of sufficient size to give two dirty soldiers a fighting chance to get clean. The hot water tank was small, and after the third or fourth bunch got under, the hot water gave out. So the unfortunates had to stand there, all lathered up, while the fireman coaxed the tank to get full of hot water again. It was a joke for the spectators, but not for the bathers.

After bathing, the next job was to wash clothing. For this purpose a tank, something like a small swimming tank, and

1. The patient ox is used to till the soil in France.
2. Where the family cow does double duty.
3. Character study of old Frenchman.
4. A "French Laundry."
5. French workmen.
6. Shoe shining "parlor."

filled with cold water, was used. There was always a crowd and it was with difficulty that one elbowed his way to the edge. Then by applying the soap and brush liberally a fair state of cleanliness was obtained. Many, who did not have a brush, used the ancient method of washing by rubbing the garment on a slab of stone and were to some extent successful.

Each morning a period of calisthenics and infantry drill was given. It did not last long, but served to get the kinks out which were acquired by sleeping on board beds. The day was spent in wandering about the barracks, becoming used to French money by buying small articles at the French canteen, and incidentally trying out our generally small vocabulary of French words. The barracks seemed like a veritable prison, with the high stone walls shutting out the view of the outer world, and its limited confines. It was therefore with much joy that we welcomed a five mile hike into the country the next Sunday morning. It was an ideal spring day and the countryside was at its best. All the natives were dressed up in their Sunday best and on promenade. Nearly everybody was dressed in black, the women wearing odd little bonnets, while the men wore flat hats with very wide brims. Wooden shoes were dispensed with for the Sunday parade. The dress of the people of Brittany is older in style than in any other section of France and old customs are adhered to closely. Many odd scenes were noted about the little farms that we passed. The houses were all very old, with thatched roofs and huge wooden props to act as supports. The fields were small and separated by hedges. The dead wood from these hedges is all gathered, tied into bundles of faggots and taken to the farm houses for fuel. The climate of Brittany is much like that of the West Coast of Oregon and Washington. The inhabitants, especially the women, have wonderful complexions, and all the appearance of good health.

On the morning of March 11th preparations were made to leave Pontonezan. As we filed out of those iron gates through the high stone wall, there was not a pang of regret, and we hoped that our next stopping place would be much more pleasant. Much was later written as to the bad conditions at this

A. B. COATES

Sergeant 1st class during training camp period; commissioned 2nd Lieut. just prior to sailing for France; promoted to 1st Lieut. July, 1918, and to Captain October, 1918. Commanding Company D during practically entire period in France; Commanding Officer of Battalion on return trip to U. S. until discharge.

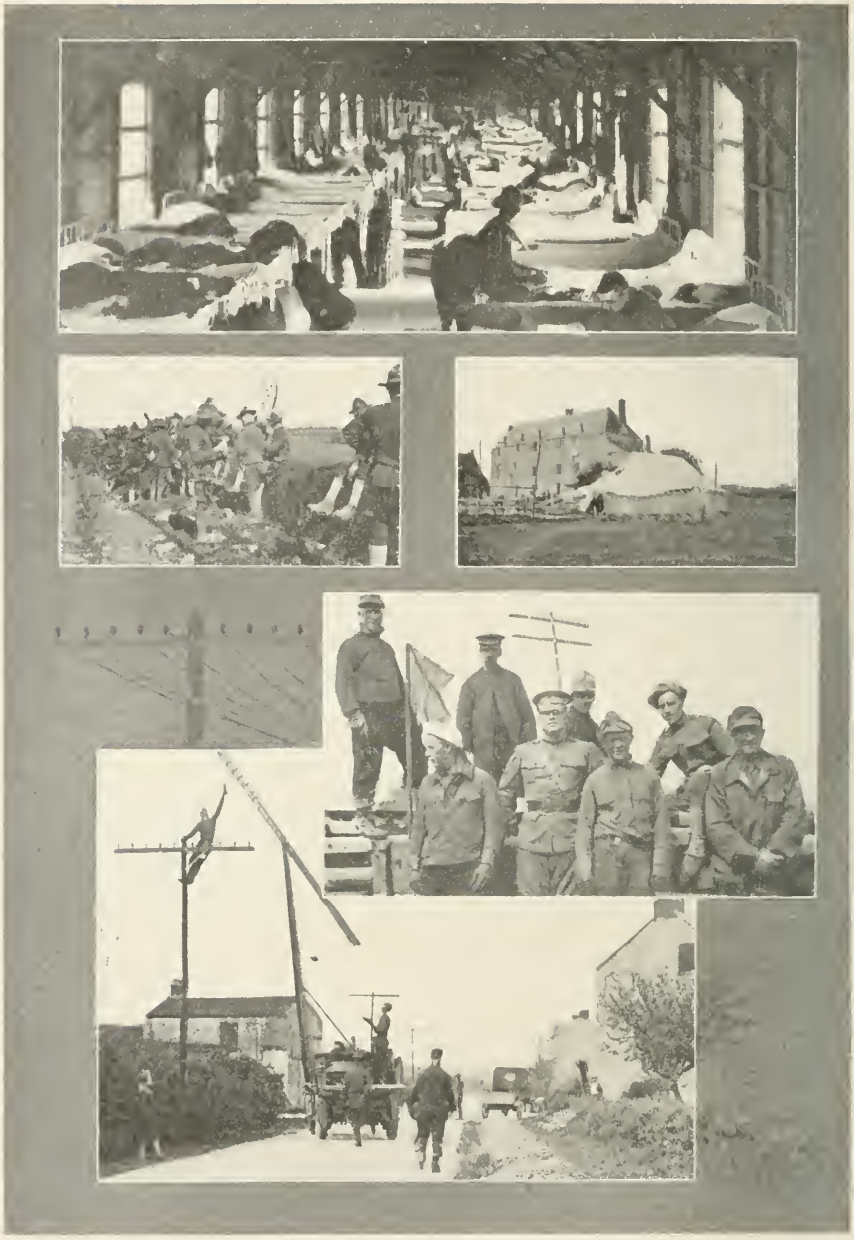
camp when it became congested with the heavy influx of troops during the spring and summer of 1918, and the debarkation of troops after the armistice. However, we feel that we were there under the rough conditions as they existed in the very beginning, and yet we can look back, without regret at our experiences there, knowing that for the first time we were soldiering and had to expect some discomforts and inconveniences.

Upon arriving at Brest, where we were to entrain, arrangements were made to issue "travel rations" to the whole Battalion before departure. This was necessary as, owing to the construction of French cars into compartments, it is not possible to pass from car to car and make distribution as it would be done in our country. Third-class coaches were provided for this trip and ten men were placed in each compartment. Exactly at noon, we started on our first trip on an European type of passenger train. Before boarding the train explicit instructions had been issued as to conduct, the rules being many and varied. No rubbish was to be thrown from the train, but placed under the seats; it was forbidden to leave the train without permission; warning was given not to put heads out of the windows, as all tunnels and bridges are very narrow and the telephone poles set very close to the track; no wine or other liquors were to be purchased at the stations, etc. Here we first saw a sign which became very familiar to us as we always saw it in public places:

"TAISEZ-VOUS, MEFIEZ. LES OREILLES,
DE L'ENNEMI VOUS ECONTENT."

Which translated means: "Shut your mouth, be cautious, the ears of the enemy are listening to you."

French railroad equipment and methods always amuse an American; the cars remind one of boxes placed on wheels and divided into several compartments for the filing away of passengers. There is hardly room for your legs and knees in the third-class coaches as you sit facing one another, and loaded down as our outfit was with packs, extra equipment, etc., all were very crowded. The engine which pulled this first train of ours was even more funny than the cars; it wouldn't make a good sized switch engine in the States; the boiler was all shiny brass; the engineer and fireman stood up in a little dinky place which corresponds to our engine cabs. Yet it was surprising the number of cars that it hauled. Bells on engines are unknown; instead they use a sort of threshing machine shrill whistle, which keeps up a continual tooting to let people know they are on the way. A large portion of the railroads in France are double-tracked. The trains run on the left hand track, and



1. Those wonderful beds first night at Savenay.
2. First hike near Brest, France.
3. Company D Barracks, Savenay.
4. Construction gang near St. Nazaire.
5. "Close up" derrick for wire stringing.

on this first trip some of us thought they had made a mistake and were expecting a head-on collision at any time; however, we soon learned that was the custom. We early noticed that the danger of accidents at grade crossings is well cared for by gates which are only opened when the railway is clear for some distance each way. A tender's house is located at each set of gates which serves as the residence. The gates and block signals during the war period were generally cared for by women (presumably of railroad men at war). At each of these little gate houses were many children who would rush out and wave at us as the train went by.

During this first trip in France all were greatly impressed with the beautiful country-side; green fields, with the well trimmed hedges criss-crossing in all directions. What a revelation in noting how every square foot of soil was utilized and intensively cultivated. Here and there would be a little village with a dozen to a couple of hundred houses, and always in the center of the village, rising high above the roofs of the houses, the church spire. We saw very few detached houses outside of the villages; in other words, the old custom of grouping together for mutual protection still prevailed.

About five o'clock in the afternoon we arrived a a little town called Rosporden where we stopped for about an hour to have supper. All had a chance to walk about town, and the natives watched us with as much curiosity as we watched them. They were not, as yet, familiar with the sight of Americans. Our train was not supplied with lights, so as soon as it began to get dark everyone tried to make themselves as comfortable as possible and go to sleep. It takes a long time to become accustomed to sleeping in a sitting posture and this first night was attended with queer experiences. One of the men in telling the writer about it said: "I woke up after a nap of what seemed to be many hours, wondering what was driving at the back of my head. I discovered it to be the toe of a No. 10 worn by Bill Wells, who owing to his extreme length, was spread all over the compartment, his long legs weaving in and out among the numerous legs that were contained therein. I shuddered to think what an awful time the boys must be having who were located in the same compartment as Torry."

At about three o'clock the next morning Company D and Headquarters Detachment were awakened by the officers, who were endeavoring to get them off the train at a place called Savenay. It was a mad scramble in the dark, every man endeavoring to find his pack, his mess gear and all the other stuff which he might have unpacked on the train, but at last it was accomplished. Company E continued on for about fifteen

WM. H. FAIRBANKS

First Adjutant of Battalion as 1st Lieutenant. Promoted to Captain and transferred from organization at Monterey. Placed in command 3rd Depot Bn., promoted to Major and brought that organization to France. Placed in command 55th Telegraph Battalion; with 5th Corps during St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne offensives.

kilometers to a town called St. Ettiene. With Major Griswold in the lead Company D and Headquarters stumbled sleepily up a long hill, through narrow, crooked streets for a couple of kilometers, finally arriving at a group of buildings known as Base Hospital No. 8. Here we were quartered in new barracks and furnished clean beds with white sheets in which to sleep. This fact is worthy of note in passing as it was the only time that such luxury was enjoyed by any whole unit during our stay in the A. E. F.

In the meantime, Company E had continued their way on to their headquarters at St. Ettiene. On arriving there they marched to their billet which happened to be a large barn on the edge of town. Here they were able to make themselves very comfortable. Bunks and mess tables were made out of lance poles and very soon a model camp had been created and they were ready for work.

Permanent quarters for Company D and Headquarters were finally found at Savenay in a large chateau. This proved rather small to accommodate all comfortably, so a couple of large tents were borrowed from the hospital and erected alongside the chateau. These tents were soon being used to put on a sideshow with Lally as the fat lady and "Red" Gray as the spieler. Enough lumber was borrowed from the engineers to make bunks for the men in the chateau and the hospital loaned enough beds to go around in the tents; so once more all men in the Battalion had a good bed, which had not been enjoyed since leaving Monterey.

While waiting for orders to begin work we had opportunity to learn something of the habits, language and every day life of the French people. As our subsequent experiences in all the villages where we were billeted in France were very similar, it will be well for the reader to learn something about them. The people were extremely hospitable to us and we were soon acquainted and made them understand, with our half French and half American lingo, just where we were from, what the United States looked like, etc. Everybody purchased a French-American dictionary, which was always carried and continually referred to. With the aid of this dictionary and

the assistance of a few men in the Battalion who could speak French, we soon mastered the simpler words and phrases.

The inhabitants of these villages consisted mostly of old men, women and children: the younger and middle-aged men were all absent in service. They were for the most part poorly dressed and wore wooden shoes. Although it has always been the custom for European women to work in the fields and do other manual labor, this condition was greatly enhanced by the absence of so many men. The women were daily in the fields, doing all the tasks which a man could do—ploughing, pitching hay, raking or digging—showing surprising energy and strength. The drinking of wine and other beverages is universal by men and women. However, the manner of their drinking is entirely different from what we had been accustomed to seeing in our own country. All the drinking places are provided with tables and chairs and the people sit about in a sociable manner, drinking slowly and seemingly for the pleasure and not the effect. During all of our service in France we saw very few cases of intoxication except occasionally on fete days.

One day each week there is always a public market day in these small towns. It is generally held in the "place" in front of the City Hall or "Hotel de Ville" as it is called. The peasants from the surrounding country bring in their products and sell them from little booths to the village folk. In other stands itinerant venders offer every conceivable commodity for sale. A custom which always interested the Americans was the selling of eels. They were kept alive in a tub, and skinned and dressed as ordered by the customer.

During these first days in France we were fortunate in having time and opportunity to learn a great deal about our new friends—the French inhabitants. Withal we found them a very hospitable, open-hearted, courteous, kindly people. They were particularly gracious to us Americans and showed us every consideration. Much has been written about the French and their peculiar customs, but it was the good fortune of our outfit to receive universally fine treatment during all of our stay in the A. E. F., and the writer believes that much of this was due from the fact that we made friendly contact with them

in the very beginning. More will be said about this angle of our experiences as our story progresses, but the writer is sure that each of us will always affectionately recall the kindliness, the gentleness, and the good natured spirit in which these simple home folks of the valley of the Loire received us. Bowed down with four years of the horrors and griefs of war, as they were, they had not lost faith and were embued with that spirit of service to their country, which eventually helped more than any other one thing to bring victory about.

K. S. WEBSTER

First Lieut. Dental Corps. Joined 111th January, 1919. Was of inestimable value to Organization as all were badly in need of dental work. Promoted to Captain in March, 1919.

VII

OUR FIRST REAL JOB

THE first job assigned to our Battalion was the building of a standard ten-wire lead from St. Nazaire to Nantes, a distance of approximately thirty-nine miles. This was the beginning of the vast wire net which was planned to take care of the communications in the area known as the SOS—Service of Supply. The headquarters of the American Expeditionary Forces was located at Chaumont; the headquarters of the SOS at Tours. The principal base ports in France were located at St. Nazaire, Bordeaux, Le Harve and Brest. At all of these base ports vast warehouses, railroad terminals and supply bases of every description were being erected, and throughout the SOS, storage warehouses, motor parks, ordnance stores, base hospitals, supply dumps, forestry camps, railroad assembling and repair shops, etc., were being constructed. Adequate communication had to be secured with all of these activities from headquarters SOS at Tours, from GHQ (General Headquarters) at Chaumont, and then in turn with "the front." It was, therefore, with a feeling that we were at last "on the job" where we could do some real work when we started this first construction work from one of the base ports.

The Battalion had been fully equipped in the States and it was expected that we would have this equipment in France very shortly after arrival. Due, however, to the fact that at that time, equipment of this kind was extremely short, not having begun to arrive in sufficient quantities from the States, it was all "pooled" at the base ports and issued to the various organizations in accordance with the most urgent requirements. We succeeded in obtaining sufficient transportation to meet our urgent requirements, but practically no line construction tools were available. By borrowing every conceivable kind of tool in the way of shovels, digging bars, hand saws, bits and braces, axes, etc., from the French inhabitants, we were finally

able to begin actual work. Later, regular signal corps equipment became available, and we had as good an outfit as was obtainable anywhere, but we will always remember those first few weeks when we accomplished difficult work despite poor and inadequate tools.

While the route of the line was being determined, arrangements were made with the French government to secure poles from a supply which they had on hand in Savenay, and gangs were put to work in the yards, framing and roofing. The poles were of a native wood, similar to our pine and were of a very light type. They could hardly be classed as a "C" in the States, but it was from this type of poles that all of the pole lines in France were constructed, and it can be easily understood that the problem of properly strengthening leads thus became a more difficult one.

As this was the first real job done by our men as a military organization, it was necessary to follow some plan to secure the maximum of result, as it was evident from the first that work was going to be done under high pressure. The work itself did not present any particular obstacles to overcome. To men who had built lines in our Western mountains, across deserts and swamps; and who had been a part of the organization to carry the "threads of speech" across three thousand miles of hills, valleys and plains between San Francisco and New York, this little toll line in the rich farm land valley of the

On St. Nazaire-Nantes lead: left to right, Lieut. Smith, Scott, Director LeMarie and his assistant, Captain Moore, leaning against the "Big McFarland." Two E Co. linemen completing guy.

1. Wire stringing with derrick.
2. American construction by 411th between St. Nazaire and Nantes.
3. First pole yard, Savenay.
4. "Doc" Cook and gang "pulling in" near Savenay.
5. Reel wagon, St. Nazaire-Nantes.

Loire was easy. The problem of fully utilizing a military organization, divided into the different units and grades of army life, did present some angles of difficulties which had to be overcome if the maximum results were to be had. These problems were worked out by the officers in consultation with the men of the organization. Advantage of the previous experience was taken, and it was not long before the eight sections, into which a signal corps Telegraph Battalion is divided, were eight gangs of telephone workmen, digging holes, setting poles, stringing wire, etc.

The two companies each had a surveying crew which staked and laid out its own portion of the line. No fine transits were available; makeshift affairs, consisting of a pair of field glasses set on a stick, had to be used. As fast as stakes were placed in the ground, the French inhabitants would pull them up for firewood. After sending an interpreter over the route of the line and explaining, this trouble was overcome. Each company had been furnished with a detachment of twenty-five Greek laborers; they were used for digging holes, handling poles and the usual "grunt" jobs. These Greeks were among some of the first civilian laborers hired by our Government and were somewhat of an experiment. They became quite proficient in learning line work and remained with our outfit until we were called to the front some months later.

The route of this lead made it necessary to cross private property in many places, and although we had been furnished with general permits by the French Government to be used in case of right-of-way difficulties, it was thought best to secure verbal permits by careful explanation. This was done by interpreters and created an extremely kindly feeling all along the route. The peasant farmers were in nearly all cases obliging and ready to allow us to set poles and anchors on their property where necessary. The writer recalls one case where a pole had to be set in a yard surrounded by a high stone wall. It happened to be on the premises of the mayor of the little town through which the line passed. On seeing it would be difficult to get the pole equipped with the cross arm over with the help on hand, the mayor opened the front door of his house and invited us to carry the pole through the hallway and into

CHAS. W. SMITH

Assigned to Battalion at Savenay and immediately made Adjutant. Mr. Smith was able to speak French fluently and was of invaluable service to us in negotiating with the French; it was no doubt due to his ability in this respect that enabled us to get along so well and secure favors that others could not obtain. Promoted to 1st Lieut. in October, 1918. He undoubtedly had more duties assigned to him than any other one man in any single organization in the A. E. F.

the back yard. This proved the easier way and the pole was quickly in the ground. Upon returning through the house the crew found a table set with wine and glasses and the hospitable mayor waiting to serve them.

On account of accessibility for maintenance, however, the greater portion of our leads in France were set alongside the highway. On this first work of ours, trucks were equipped with derricks which enabled poles to be set more rapidly than by hand and pike poles. Trucks were also equipped for the stringing of wire after the pole line was ready. All of this work was watched with a great deal of interest by the French Postes and Telephone officials, and the writer will quote from notes made by one of the members of a party delegated to explain the details to a group of French officials who came to look over this particular line.

"At the end of the line holes were being dug by means of the long digging bars and spoons in the more or less soft ground, while a short distance away, a number had to be blown with dynamite. Upon our approach to the latter place, the party stopped for a moment to see several effective charges blown, the electric current being supplied from a Nash Quad truck, much to the surprise of the spectators who looked on in open-eyed amazement like boys seeing their first circus. Erecting of the poles by means of a truck equipped with a derrick was the next step. Next we came to the 10 reel truck paying out wire immediately behind a truck with an arrangement which had efficiency written all over it. This contrivance, built on the idea of a long arm with pins spaced to the width of a 10 pin X arm, worked on the idea of a see-saw, dipping down on one side of a pole, picking up all 10 wires on the other side, moved along to the next pole and set them down on the X arm where a lineman was waiting to steer them into the proper spaces on the X arm.

"We next came upon the wire pulling gang, which proved the most interesting to the French Engineers, that of pulling 10 wires at one time, the motive power used being an auto truck. This caused the remark by one of them that they only pulled one wire at a time and the lineman carried the wire on

GEORGE R. O. RUTHERFURD

First Lieutenant, Company 1, under which assignment he served practically during entire period of service. At time of Armistice was going to Officers' School and would shortly have been promoted to Captain.

his back. The method of making the transpositions was also explained to them, this feature being taken care of on the reel truck. Copper sleeves for splicing wire was also new to them.

"The next and last step, the guyed and completed lead, brought out very favorable comment.

"An amusing incident happened this day when, for the first time, a French lineman tried to use American "hooks." This Frenchman had seen some of our linemen "hit the stick"

about five feet from the ground and run up to the "roof." He started and after a very laborious climb reached the top, and then he could not get down. He finally succeeded by taking it very easy and a few inches at a time. Thus was the American hook and safety belt introduced to the French, who later were making plans to replace all their old style climbers."

After completion of our St. Nazaire-Nantes project, orders were received to string the wire on the pole line continuing east from Nantes in the direction of Tours to a place called Beaupreau, a distance of approximately forty-one miles. This pole line had been erected by another Battalion, but they were short on telephone linemen, and as the fame of our "wire stringing machine" had reached Tours, we were assigned the job of completing the wire job. It is generally conceded that this was one of the fastest wire stringing jobs performed in the A. E. F.

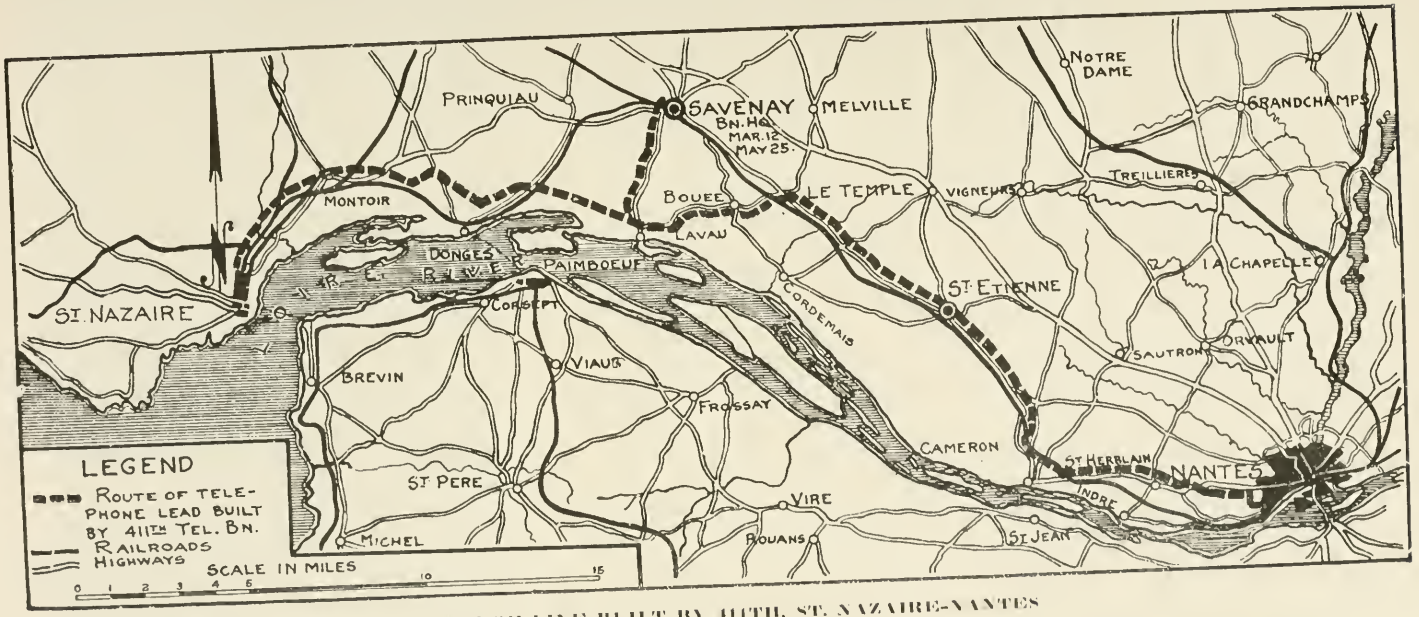
During the time our work had been progressing, almost a complete change of officer organization had taken place in our Battalion. Major A. H. Griswold, who had commanded the outfit from the time of being called into service, was ordered to Tours about three weeks after arrival at Savenay, for the purpose of assuming charge of the Telephone and Telegraph Department under the Chief Signal Officer, A. E. F. Captain Barbour was ordered to Tours to take charge of maintenance work, and Lieutenant Curran to the same place to handle engineering work. Captain C. H. Moore, who had been in command of Company D from the time of being called into service was ordered to assume command of the Battalion, and continued in command until the outfit was ordered to return to the States. Lieutenant Scott assumed command of Company E, and Lieutenant Coates of Company D. Second Lieutenant Charles W. Smith had been assigned to us and he was made Battalion Adjutant.

During the month of April, Lieutenant Rutherfurd had returned to the Battalion, bringing with him the two quarantined sections which we had been obliged to leave behind at Camp Merritt. We were badly in need of these men as during the time we had been in the A. E. F. we had lost many by assignments on "special duty." This was a form of procedure which

greatly disturbed our organization and consisted of taking men away from the outfit for some special duty in other parts of France. However, at that time, competent telephone and tele-

DONALD W. SCOTT

First Lieutenant, Company D; assigned to command Company E shortly after arrival in France; promoted to Captain July, 1918, continuing in command of Company E. Captain Scott was taken seriously ill early in February, 1919, and was taken to the Hospital at Chaumont, where a serious and complicated operation was performed. He was there until May, when he was evacuated to the U. S. Apparently fully recovered, he was discharged and returned to the employ of the Telephone Company, being assigned to the position of Wire Chief at Fresno. Here he was prospering and very happy with his wife and daughter. Suddenly, he was taken ill about the 20th of September, 1920, and only lived a few days. His untimely passing has saddened the hearts of his old comrades as he was much beloved by all.



ROUTE OF LINE BUILT BY 411TH, ST. NAZAIRE-NANTES

graph men were not plentiful, and it was quite necessary to take these men for important work at other points. At the time it seemed hard to part with our men, as they had become part of the "family" and it made it more difficult to do our work, as no replacements were possible for some months afterwards.

And so our first complete job in France was at an end, as the wire stringing had been completed to Beaupreau and the lines all connected through to Tours at 3:30 P. M. Saturday, May 25th. These were the first completed circuits from headquarters SOS to a base port, and to show how urgently they were required, one of our testors had to wait until nearly eleven P. M. that evening before taking any chance on disturbing the heavy traffic.

Our outfit was being gradually drilled into a smooth going telephone organization. Many almost insurmountable difficulties had been overcome on this first job and we were becoming more and more embued with the importance of the service we were able to give our country. The men were working hard and doing it with a spirit which brought results. "Daylight to dark" was our working schedule and yet we were "raring to go" and anxious to know where the next job was to be.

VIII

PARIS AND ENVIRONS

IF a vote could have been taken of the entire organization as to the place they desired to go next, it would have been "to the front" as the first choice, and to the "battle of Paris" as the second. The stage was not yet quite set for us to be sent to the battle zone as an organization, and when we were told the next morning after completing Beaupreu job, it would be Versailles, there was loud rejoicing, as the prospect of being stationed almost at the gates of Paris was indeed a happy thought. The move was to be overland by motor truck, and we had an early reveille at 4:00 A. M. so as to be on the road by daylight. The country through which we passed was higher and more wooded than that in which we had been accustomed while living in the valley of the Loire. The first night we camped on the roadside not far from La Fleche, and it was a regular gypsy life. We visited the village in the evening and derived much pleasure in comparing the slightly different customs of these people with those among whom we had been living. The next morning we were on the road at daylight and arrived in LeMans about ten A. M. This is quite a large city, and it was here that the Wright Brothers first had an opportunity of demonstrating their aeroplane inventions to the French, after our country had refused to listen to them. This city became one of the big embarkation centers after the armistice.

After leaving Le Mans the road is practically straight for a distance of twenty-five miles. And what a wonderful road it was! Built first in a very early day by the Romans, it had been carefully maintained under the system of taking care of roads by the French. It had not been subjected to any heavy truck traffic like the roads further to the south which were beginning to feel the strain of heavy truck trains from the base ports, and we traveled along in our trucks for miles and miles

1. Alexander III Bridge; looking toward the Grand Palace of Art.
2. American Army and Red Cross Nurses July 4, 1918. Parade, Paris.
3. French Cavalry July 1, 1918. Parade, Paris.
4. Eiffel Tower.
5. Trochadero Museum, Paris.

with hardly any more jar than had we been riding in the Commanding Officer's McFarlan. He drove the entire distance to Paris, about two hundred and forty miles, in seven hours. Our camp that night was on the roadside about nine kilometers from Chartes, which is one of the very oldest cities in France and rich in historic interest. The cathedral is a very large and beautiful one, and its spire can be seen nearly as far as the eye can reach in all directions.

From here on the country was more thickly populated as we were nearing the big center of Paris. At noon we stopped at St. Cyr, which is the "West Point" of France. The school covers a large space and during the war it was one of the most important training centers for French officers. Here was also located one of the large aeroplane factories. We saw many wrecks of Bosche planes which had just come in from the front: also the remains of allied planes. Practically every one in the outfit was destined to have an air ride from this field and an adjoining one during our stay in Versailles. After lunch we drove on into Versailles and on up the Hill to Camp Satory which was to be our station. Arrangements had been made for us and we were soon settled. This was an old French Camp, the buildings were of wood and not in a very good state of

July 4, 1918, celebration at St. Germaine. Battalion standard and colors. Lieut. Smith standing against door, he made address in French to townspeople, who practically turned the day into a fete for members of the 111th.

repair. However, as we did not have to go to work immediately, everyone pitched in and cleaned up.

While waiting for actual work to begin on our new job permission was given to visit Paris and see some of the other many interesting things. About forty decided to visit the Palace of Versailles, and as practically everyone in the organization had an opportunity of making this visit later, it will be interesting to chronicle a few of the sights, although it would take a volume to tell all about the wonderful palace and its surroundings where Louis XIV and his Royal family played centuries ago. We hired a guide to take us through the Palaces and grounds; he was a little old Frenchman who spoke fair English and who had a great deal of pep and ambition. We first visited some of the rooms on the second floor, the first one we visited containing a very fine bust of Napoleon and many war relics of his time. The rooms were elaborately finished, all had hardwood floors, and the walls were hung with the most gorgeous and beautiful tapestries. We passed on into the state bed room of the King which was in the front of the Palace, overlooking the marble court. The beds were wonderful creations, the canopies and coverings of heavily embroidered silk. Next we visited the State Council Chamber where the King held meetings with his ministers. There was a small throne in this room, and the table around which the ministers used to gather was most beautifully inlaid with gold and silver. Then in succession we visited the card room, the music room and various other chambers which were used for different entertainment and social purposes, and then into the Hall of Mirrors, which has since became more famous as the room in which the Paris Peace Treaty was signed. Stepping out onto the balcony from this room a fine view was obtained of the very extensive gardens; first the terraces, with their fountains and flower beds; then large stairways lead down to the lower walks and the lagoon. Looking past the lagoon, the end of the gardens, fully a mile and a half from the balcony, presented a most imposing scene, the trees which were very large and symetrically trimmed, giving the effect of a high green wall. Stepping back through the Hall of Mirrors, we passed on into many

other beautiful rooms, the walls and ceilings of which were decorated with very fine paintings, the woodwork heavily gilded. We then saw the winter ballroom, which was not as large as the other and was used for private dancing parties. From the walls were hung large oil paintings of famous battles. Next we visited the chapel, which Louis XIV had built for himself

WILLIAM H. CURRAN

First Lieutenant, Company E during training camp period; made Battalion Adjutant just prior to leaving Monterey. Transferred from organization shortly after arrival in France and assigned to special engineering duties at SOS headquarters, Tours. Had charge of planning lines of communication in SOS and Advance Section. Promoted to Captain and then to Major during Summer and Fall, 1918. Signal Officer Advance Section after Armistice.

and court attendants in which to worship; it was most elaborately finished, the pews being covered with fine plush. The gallery of battle pictures contained oil paintings of all the famous battles in which the French have taken part from the time France was first inhabited by the Phoenecians up until the war of 1871. All of these paintings were very well preserved and looked like new. And then, lastly, we visited the room which is only used for the purpose of swearing in the President of France at the time he takes the oath of office.

Passing out of the Palace onto the Terrace the famous fountains are in view. At that time the water was turned off on account of the war, but it was easy to visualize the scene when it was in full play. We crossed on through the garden to the bathing pool and other places of interest, and then on to the coach house. Here are housed all the famous coaches and other vehicles which have been used by the members of royalty. They were all carved and heavily gilded. The writer's special attention was directed to one which had been built for a special state occasion and had only been used twice. In glass cases around the walls were the harnesses which were of the very finest leather, with gold and silver mountings, buckles and trimmings. From here we visited the petite and grand trianon Palaces. These two palaces were used by the King when he tired of living in the Grand Palace. They were much smaller and not as elaborate. One particular room of interest to all visitors was one used by Louis XIV in which to dine. The table was set on a trap door on the floor and was lowered below to the kitchens and pantries where the meal was placed upon it. It was then raised into the room, where the King dined alone. We might have remained and been interested for many hours longer, but the day was drawing to a close, and after visiting the dairy farm of Marie Antoinette, we wandered back to camp well pleased with our brief visit to the Palace of Versailles.

A GLIMPSE OF ACTIVE SERVICE AT THE FRONT

During the time that we had been in France many inquiries had been made from time to time as to when we were going to the front? It was all very well to be building toll lines and

MSE. GARRETT EXHIBITING A PAIR OF FRENCH CLIMBERS OR HOOKS

doing other important telephone and telegraph work, but the allies during these months were passing through the most critical period of the war, and every man in the outfit was anxious to get further up where he could hear the roar of battle and really feel that he was a participant. Although the United States had at this time been in the war for over a year, and our First Division had been in France for most of that year, American troops had not engaged in any real fighting. During March, at a conference in Paris, Secretary of War Baker and General Pershing had decided that our forces should be turned over to Marshall Foch; the President had approved by cable, and on the 28th of March, at a meeting of the allied commanders, General Pershing had made that memorable declaration to Marshall Foch: "All that we have is yours; use it as you wish."

There were four American Divisions in France at that time—only a little more than 100,000 combatant troops. General Pershing's offer was accepted; the first division was sent to the line opposite Montdidier; the 26th went in the line at

1. Arch de Triumphe.
2. Napoleon's Tomb.
3. "The Obelisk" looking across one of the fountains, Place de la Concorde.
4. Bastile Monument.
5. French Cavalry July 4, 1919 Parade.
6. American Infantry July 4, 1919 Parade.

St. Mihiel. At last American troops had entered the war on the firing line. During the month of April and May upwards of 350,000 American troops poured into France; there was now no question as to the numbers which were coming, but how would they fight? That was the vital question to America, to the Allies and to the common enemy in May, 1918. Germany belittled the possibility of our fighting well; the Allied press had taken success for granted; neither side was quite sure; the stage was set for the trial. The little town of Cantigny was the center of a small salient projecting into the Allied line west of Montdidier.

An attack had been planned to take place by the 28th Infantry of the 1st Division on the morning of the 28th of May, but an event of the day before is mentioned here, as it made the forthcoming success in taking Cantigny the only ray of light on an otherwise dismal picture. On the morning of May 27th a great mass of German troops had suddenly pushed across the Ailette, over the strong position of the Chemin des Dames, and before the day was done they had pushed across the Vesle and were on their way south to the Marne. The communiques had little encouragement of allied progress. The next day, however, the 28th Infantry, supported by French tank battalions, a platoon of French flame throwers and a small force of 1st U. S. Engineers, passed all obstacles, overcame the German defenses, captured or killed the defenders and held Cantigny against all subsequent counter attacks.

This small engagement was of great importance: it gave encouragement to the Allies and confidence in the ability of U. S. troops to fight "on their own." General Pershing in speaking of this engagement in his report said: "Although local, this brilliant action had an electrical effect, as it demonstrated our fighting qualities under extreme battle conditions."

The 411th had the opportunity of helping in a small way in this engagement, as on the morning of May 25th an order was received to rush a small detachment of expert linemen under command of an officer to assist the Signal Officer of the 1st Division in preparing the lines of communication on the proposed offensive against Cantigny. Lieutenant A. B.

MEMBERS OF COMPANY D ARE PHOTOGRAPHED WITH SOME OF THEIR FRENCH FRIENDS AT BRIE COMPTE ROBERT

Coates, with a detachment of fifteen men, was hurried across country by motor truck to Marseilles la petite and Fontaine. They did most efficient work, in keeping up communication, and had an opportunity of installing telephone service in temporary headquarters for Marshall Foch and General Pershing. This detachment had many lively stories to tell upon their return and the camp was all trembling with excitement for many days. Active service had been experienced and everybody wanted to be up where the "Big Show" was going on.

On June 1st Company D was moved to St. Germain-En-Laye, a wealthy suburb about twelve kilometers northwest of Versailles, that they might be more advantageously located to carry on the work. The night of the day they moved will be remembered as our first experience in air raids. At this time it was almost a nightly occurrence for the Hun bombing planes to make air raids over Paris and the surrounding suburbs. A very elaborate system of signaling devices of all kinds had been

installed for the purpose of advising the inhabitants as soon as the outlying observation posts detected the Germans coming over. As soon as the "alerte" was sounded, every light in the city and suburbs was immediately switched off, trolley lines and the subway stopped and in fact an absolute cessation of traffic took place. The inhabitants immediately sought "abri" locations, and absolute quiet was presumed to prevail until the "all clear" signal was given. On this particular night of our first experience, the "alerte" was sounded about 11:30 P. M.; the sky was immediately lighted with a great many searchlights weaving their shafts of light back and forth across the heavens in search of the Hun planes. The anti-aircraft guns opened fire and the sky was filled with boquets of fire from the bursting shells. Added to all of these deafening noises was the shrill blast of sirens from every side warning the inhabitants to flee to the "abris." One's impression at first was that a gigantic Fourth of July celebration was being rehearsed, and the writer, in common with many others of our outfit, stood out in the open square of the Palace of Versailles a very much interested spectator, until a gendarme came along and hustled us all to cover. Air raids were of very frequent occurrence after that and interfered very much with our rest. The men were working very hard from daylight to dark and went to bed each night dead tired, only to be awakened after a couple of hours sleep and hustled down into the caves, to stand in half slumber until the "all clear" was given.

The job which had been assigned us in this locality was an extremely important one and had to be finished in the very shortest possible time. It consisted in the building of a twenty-four wire lead from a junction with the British lines at a small place called Ham to La belle Epine, just south of Paris, a distance of approximately thirty-three and one-third miles. This lead was to serve as the connecting link between Chaumont, the toll switching point to be La belle Epine just outside the gates of Paris. After careful consideration it was decided to build the lead along the highway and to utilize an existing French lead jointly wherever possible. This job presented many difficulties in the way of strengthening the French lead, building

through forests, over canals, cable work through a half mile railroad tunnel, private right-of-ways over property owned by Royalty, transposition problems in connecting with a different system of the British and constant delays and annoyances in obtaining the necessary material which had to be hauled long distances by motor truck. Everybody in the organization was working from daylight to dark, as orders had been received that the work absolutely had to be finished not later than June 30th.

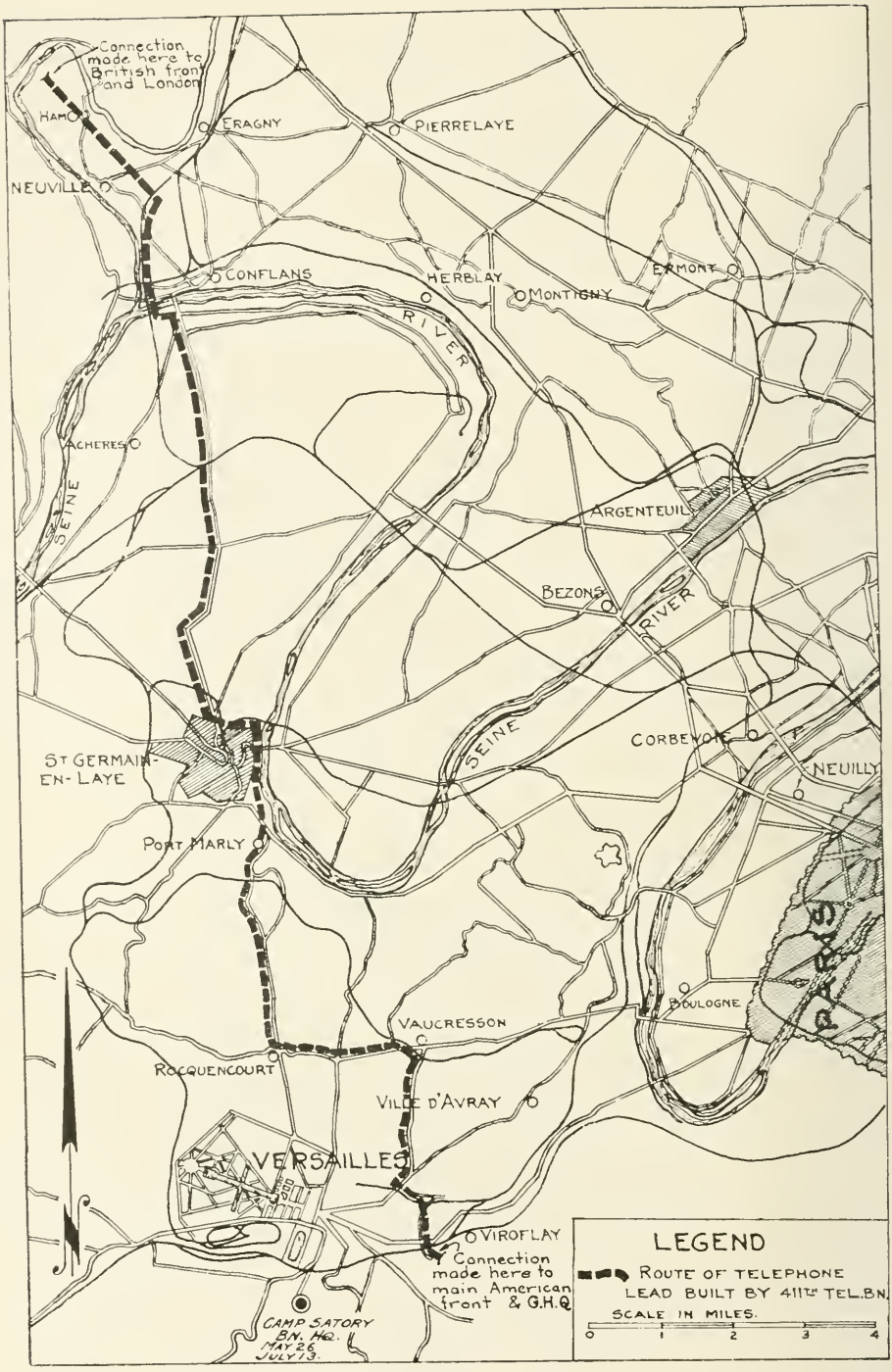
As the foregoing work was nearing completion we re-

JOHN L. BURNS

Second Lieutenant Signal Corps. Assigned to Battalion in July, 1918. With Company D until discharge in U. S.

ceived orders to begin the construction of the toll operating buildings and exchange at La belle Epine. The buildings, three in number—exchange, barracks and garage, were constructed with Adrian barrack material. On account of the importance of the equipment to be placed in the toll operating exchange building, it was believed that it would later be decided to build of more substantial material—it being questionable if the light Adrian barrack material would withstand the elements after a few weeks. A concrete floor was laid in this building with a slab of concrete three feet thick and a finish one inch thick. A three inch clearance was provided beyond the outside edges of the wooden structure to permit of the permanent structure above mentioned. The garage and barracks were erected of the Adrian barrack material, reinforced in the weak places so as to assure the structures standing up under the heavy wind and rain storms which were of more or less frequent occurrence in that locality. Part of the plan of the La belle Epine project involved the use of the French underground cable from this point to Paris. Permission was obtained to build a manhole directly across from the exchange building; a trench was tunneled under the highway and tile ducts laid. The necessary duct runs were also provided from the cable to the distributing frame, to the engine room where the power plant was to be located and to other points where it was apparent they might be required. An engine base of concrete was constructed in the garage and two storage battery charging and two lighting sets mounted. In fact, a complete layout for the establishment of the toll switching center was planned and completed. It will be easily understood that the obtaining of the necessary materials for all of this work under the conditions which existed at that time, lack of proper tools, etc., was a big handicap, but the job had to be done, and was accomplished despite the handicaps and in record time.

In the meantime, the remainder of the organization was engaged in building a 10-wire lead from La belle Epine to Guignes, a distance of about twenty-five miles. This constituted the last remaining gap of the Chaumont-Paris lead, and right at that time was most urgently required—not only to


Connection made here to British front and London
HAM
ERAGNY
PIERRELAYE
NEUVILLE
CONFLANS
HERBLAY
MONTIGNY
ERMONT
RIVER
ACHERES
SEINE
ARGENTEUIL
BEZONS
RIVER
SEINE
CORBEVOIE
NEUILLY
ST GERMAIN-EN-LAYE
PORT MARLY
VAUCRESSON
BOULOGNE
PARIS
ROCQUENCOURT
VILLE D'AVRAY
VERSAILLES
VIROFLAY
Connection made here to main American front & G.H.Q
CAMP SATORY
B.N. HQ.
MAY 26
JULY 13.
LEGEND
ROUTE OF TELEPHONE LEAD BUILT BY 411TH TEL. BN.
SCALE IN MILES.
0
1
2
3
4

handle the heavy amount of traffic from GHQ at Chaumont to Paris but also that communication might be established with British GHQ over the lead which we had just completed from La belle Epine to the connecting British point at Ham. The pole line was practically completed and we were just ready to begin stringing wire when the news which we had been awaiting for months arrived: "The 411th Telegraph Battalion will report to the Chief Signal Officer of the First Army without delay."

Before leaving the area of the SOS and chronicling the events in the zone of the army, the writer believes he should tell the reader a little of Paris. It was the writer's good fortune to have made many visits to the "City of Lights" during his stay in the A. E. F., and it is difficult to tell very much about this city in a short narrative. Therefore, this portion of our story will be confined to a recital of places visited during a day and a half sojourn in the style capital of the World.

Visiting Paris for the first time, and especially during that period, one is not impressed with any particular idea of being in a large city; the buildings are not high, the people do not hurry, everybody appears good-natured and in fact one seems to feel that all are just there to have a good time. But we had heard all our lives that there was a great deal to see, and after picking up a couple of army friends, we started out, and it so happened that the first place of note we visited was the Madeline. So far as memory serves the writer, this is the only large church in France which did not have a spire. It is of the Grecian type of architecture with large doric columns in front. We strolled along the Rue Royale to the Place de la Concorde, which without doubt is the most wonderful Place in Europe. Located at the end of the world famous Champs Elysees and in front of the Tuileries Gardens, it has within its confines the monument of Alsace-Lorraine (at that time draped in mourning, in which state it had been since the war of 1870) a statute made of melted cannons captured by Napoleon during his different wars, surmounted by a figure of the great General on horseback; Cleopatra's Needle; and many other statutes, monments and fountains, commemorative of historical events. Cross-

1. Station, Tours.
2. Stop of Leave Train.
3. Where 411th men first went "up in the air."
4. Effect aerial bomb "Metro."
5. Aerial raid, Paris.
6. French telephone installers, Paris.

ing the Place de la Concorde, we reached the Bridge of Alexander III spanning the River Seine. This bridge is said to be one of the most beautiful in the world. As we pass across the bridge we hesitate a few minutes to watch the craft of all descriptions moving up and down the river; "How much more use the people here seem to make of their waterways than we do in our country," someone in the party remarked.

Reluctantly we leave the busy river scene and pass on to Les Invalides. In the courtyard are many relics of past wars and trophies captured in the present great war. Here we saw for the first time German aeroplanes, parts of Zeppelins, different types of artillery captured from the enemy; in fact, everything that was being used on the front as an instrument of destruction. The Tomb of Napoleon is located back of Les Invalides; the well-like room is solid marble and is a very splendid and imposing resting place for so great a warrior. Many soldiers, whose uniforms represented all the allies, were passing in and out. Around his tomb were clusters of battle flags, not only those that he had captured from the enemy, but those which had been captured by his comrades, all showing the battle scarred effects of cannon fire. Someone complained about this time of having a sore foot, and suggested that we take a ride through the Bois de Boulogne, the great park of Paris. This Park is to Paris, what Central Park is to New York and Golden Gate Park to San Francisco. During all of the time that our organization was stationed at Versailles we passed through "the Bois" almost daily, and the writer is sure that all will carry a mental picture always of its evergreen trees, its little lakes overhung with trees and surrounded by flower-bordered paths; its beautiful winding roads; its tea gardens and promenades. On our return we passed through the Arc De Triomphe at the head of the Champs Elysees, stopping for a few minutes to admire the bas-reliefs and the inscriptions of Napoleon's Marshalls and Generals on the inside walls of the arches, as well as the names of many of the cities which he captured. As we left the Arc, we had our first view down the Champs Elysees from the Etoile. Already there was a conspicuous coloring of American Olive Drab, but only a hint of what

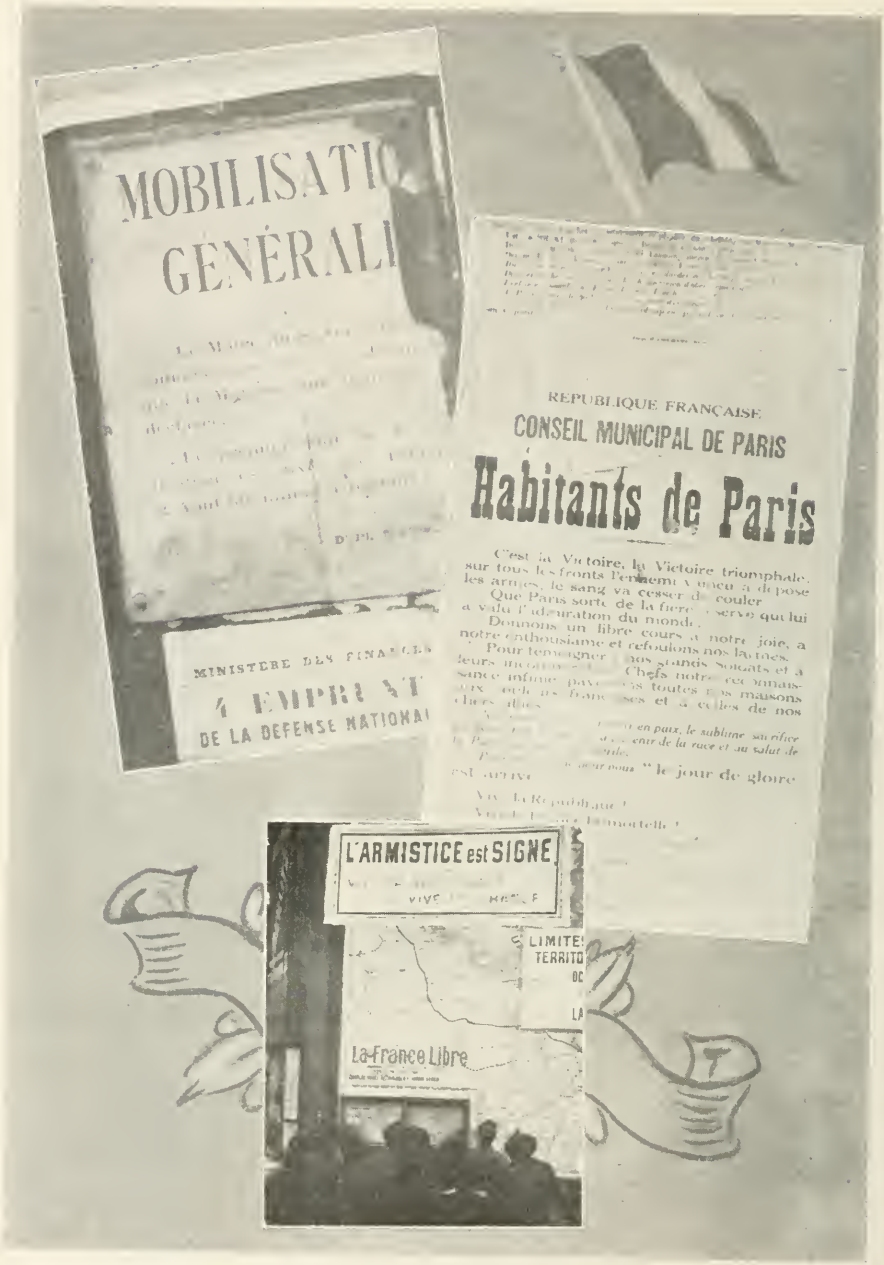
was to come when this boulevard became the most Americanized street of Europe in the succeeding months of 1918 and 1919. With its broad, well paved boulevard, bordered on either side by wide sidewalks and lined with trees, is it any wonder that this thoroughfare is the favorite promenade for the Parisian and visitors? We rode on down the Champs Elysees, again passing through the Place de la Concorde and on down town to the "Cafe de la Paix." This cafe is a sort of institution in Paris, and it used to be said that if one were to sit in

H. T. EAST
Second Lieutenant Signal Corps. Joined 411th August, 1918 and assigned to duties as Supply Officer.

front long enough he would see everybody in the world whom he knew pass by. And here we ate, drank and gazed upon the promenadors.

After lunch we visited the Bastile. The original building, you will remember by referring to your history, was torn down at the time of the French Revolution. On the site of the famous old prison is a column, surmounted by a statute of liberty, commemorating the 14th of July in the History of France. We again crossed the river to the world famous Notre Dame Cathedral. At this time the entrances and windows were entirely covered with sandbags for protection against air raids and "Big Bertha" shells. The grotesque gargoyles made quite some impression on the whole party, and all agreed that the church was typical of the infinte care of French art. We then visited the Pantheon, the Luxembourg Gardens and took a ride through the subway or "Metro" as everyone calls it in Paris. The subways of Paris are well organized and compare favorably with the best in our country. We had only started our tour, but the day was drawing to a close and we had to postpone our sightseeing on the outside to another day. The writer will not here take the time of the reader in telling about the night life of Paris, because it is a story by itself; every soldier and officer who has been in the A. E. F. has "covered" all of its angles and novelists of international renown have written stories of its individualities and allurements.

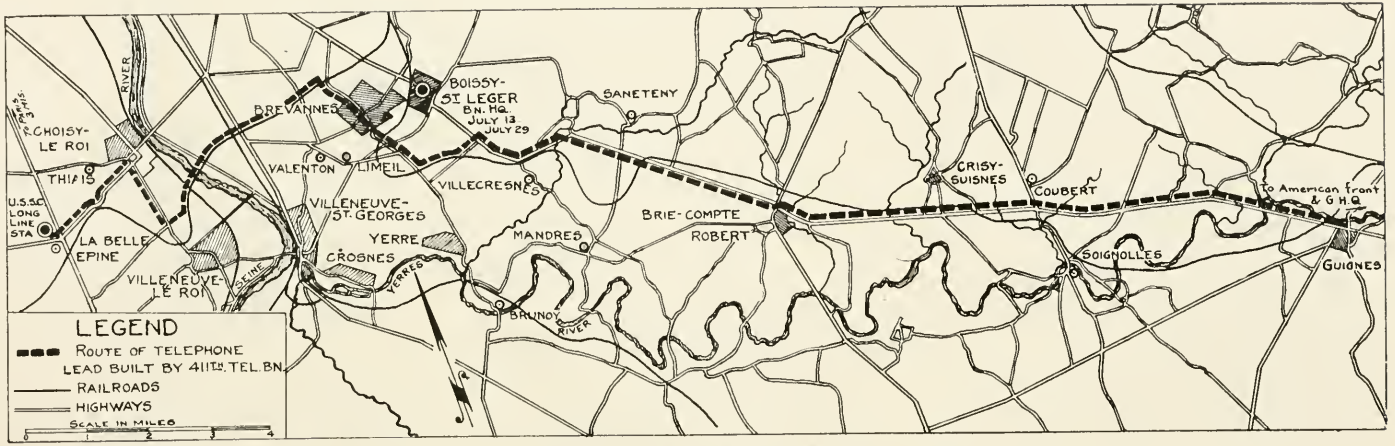
The next day we visited the Eifel Tower, the Trocadero, and then through the Tuileries Gardens. Here was a most restful spot not far from the center of the city; many people were seated throughout, people of low and high degree, and everywhere children playing; little did it seem that only twenty-five miles away the German Army was preparing what proved to be its last great offensive on Paris, for the very avowed purpose of destroying the idols of the French as they had in 1870. Indeed, as we were strolling leisurely along, enjoying these relics of the past, a "Big Bertha" exploded only a few blocks away. A few women screamed and the children were somewhat startled, but only for a few minutes and then they resumed their play. In the center of the gardens in the forward court is a



1. Original Mobilization Order.
2. "Finis" Declaration of successful ending of War.
3. Bulletin Board "La France Libre" Paris.

statute of Lafayette; the donation of the school children of America. And then we turned and passed on to the Louvre. The original Louvre was commenced in 1541 by Francois I; in 1564 Catherine de Medici carried the work on and began that portion of the building known as Les Tuileries; from this time on there were additions made by different rulers, Napoleon causing a great deal of work to be done during his time. We stood in the courtyard where the Hugenots were slaughtered and here saw the foundations of the original Louvre; standing in front of the Louvre, we could look through the Tuileries Gardens, on past the Place de la Concorde, up the Champs Elysees to the Arc de Triomphe. Here was a vast work of art and architectural beauty and we marveled at the hugeness of it and the centuries it had taken to bring it to this point of perfecion. The French have dedicated this ground in the very center of their beloved Paris that they might have a proper setting for these works of art and the relics of a history rich in achievement. The whole is made up of many small parts, each detail being carefully and artistically planned, and the completed work blending into a never-to-be-forgotten picture of beauty. But our play-day of sightseeing is over, and we must again take up the trend of our more serious work.

NOTRE DAME



OUR LAST CONSTRUCTION JOB IN THE S. O. S.

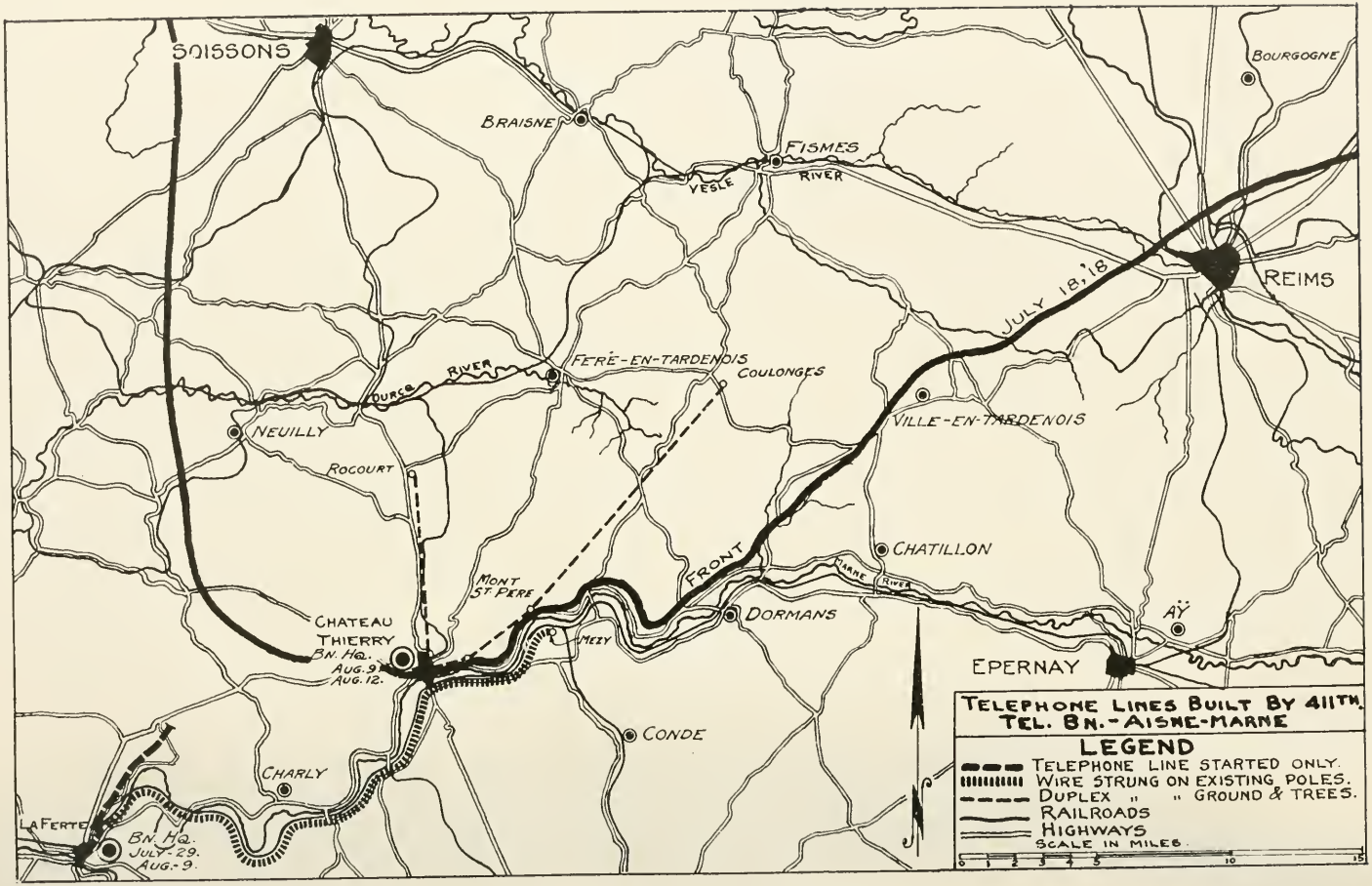
IX

IN THE BATTLE ZONE
(CHATEAU-THEIRRY)

IT is the purpose of the writer, in telling this story of our organization, to weave in a small portion covering the movement of the American Army, that the reader may have, briefly, an idea as to the general plan. It is well to recall at this time the manner in which a regiment of the 1st Division had demonstrated its skill and ability in taking the town of Cantigny. Within forty-eight hours after their success, not only the whole 2nd Division, but the 3rd Division, had received orders and were on the way with all possible speed to Chateau-Thierry to stem the German tide which was threatening to break across the Marne and on to Paris. The first American unit to meet the German offensive was the 7th Machine Gun Battalion of the 3rd Division. After being more than twenty-four hours on the road, two companies of this unit reached Chateau-Thierry on the afternoon of May 31st and immediately went into action. They helped the French stop the fierce effort which the Germans were making to cross the river, and until the Germans retreated in July there were machine gunners of this Division holding the river-crossing at Chateau-Thierry. The remainder of the 3rd Division and the 2nd Division came up into line and in the early days of June were face to face with the Germans along a considerable front including Belleau Wood and Bourecches village.

The fighting of the 2nd and 3rd Division had confirmed what the 1st Division had accomplished at Cantigny. The American resistance and fighting qualities gave new courage to the French, strengthened the allied cause, led up to the great offensive of the allies which started on July 18th, ending with the reduction of the Chateau-Thierry salient and the German retreat to the Vesle.

Our organization reached La Ferte, which was the head-


SOISSONS
BRAISNE
FISMES
VESLE
RIVER
BOURGOGNE
REIMS
JULY 18, '18
FERE-EN-TARDENOIS
COULONGES
OURCQ
RIVER
NEUILLY
ROCOURT
VILLE-EN-TARDENOIS
CHATILLON
MONT ST. PERE
FRONT
MARNE
RIVER
DORMANS
AY
CHATEAU THIERRY
BN. HQ.
AUG. 9
AUG. 12.
MEZY
EPERNAY
CONDE
CHARLY
LA FERTE
BN. HQ.
JULY 29.
AUG. 9.
TELEPHONE LINES BUILT BY 411TH. TEL. BN. - AISNE-MARNE
LEGEND
TELEPHONE LINE STARTED ONLY.
WIRE STRUNG ON EXISTING POLES.
DUPLEX " " GROUND & TREES.
RAILROADS
HIGHWAYS
SCALE IN MILES
0 1 2 3 4 5 10 15

quarters of the then forming First Army, on July 29th. We immediately began installation of switchboard and other equipment to care for a large headquarters. Also began surveying, staking and digging holes for a toll line from La Ferte to Chateau-Thierry. Early in August a detachment of one officer and eighteen men was moved to Chateau-Thierry for purpose of making switchboard installation and installing telegraph station. On August 6th the balance of one company was moved to Chateau-Thierry and they were engaged in the installation of telephones there, and the building and maintaining of lines to 1st and 3rd Corps headquarters. On August 9th Company E and Headquarters moved to Chatean-Thierry, and at once engaged in surveying and laying out contemplated toll line routes from Chatean-Thierry north to Fare-en-Tardenois and Coulonge. Part of the plan involved using abandoned German pole lines in this territory and French lead along railroad from Chatean-Thierry to Armentieres. However, just as this work was under way, orders were received to move entire Battalion to Neufchateau. This move consumed two days and was part of the great troop movement to the Toul sector in preparation for the St. Mihiel offensive. Our rate of speed was rather slow as we had to move along in our designated place in the line of march. The roads were jammed with every imaginable kind of motor vehicle, and the whole train would have to stop frequently owing to a traffic jam somewhere ahead. The first part of the journey took us along the recent battle front and we saw evidences on every hand of the great struggle which had been made in driving the Hun from this salient. In the afternoon we passed through the town of Chalons-sur-Marne and that evening stopped at a small village called Marson to eat supper. Here we met a company of Polish soldiers who were fighting with the French; they were mostly from America and spoke English. They greeted us with much happiness and extended an invitation to take coffee with them. Our journey was resumed after supper and we drove until 11:30 P. M., stopping for the remainder of the night at a small village called Possesse. The next morning we were on the way shortly after daylight and during the day passed through a very pretty country—not so many villages, but many

C. H. MOORE

Commanding Company D from June 29, 1917, to shortly after arrival in France when was assigned to command Battalion. Transferred from organization just prior to outfit sailing for U. S. in April, 1919, and assigned to duty as Chief Signal Officer Base Section No. 9, with headquarters at Antwerp, Belgium.

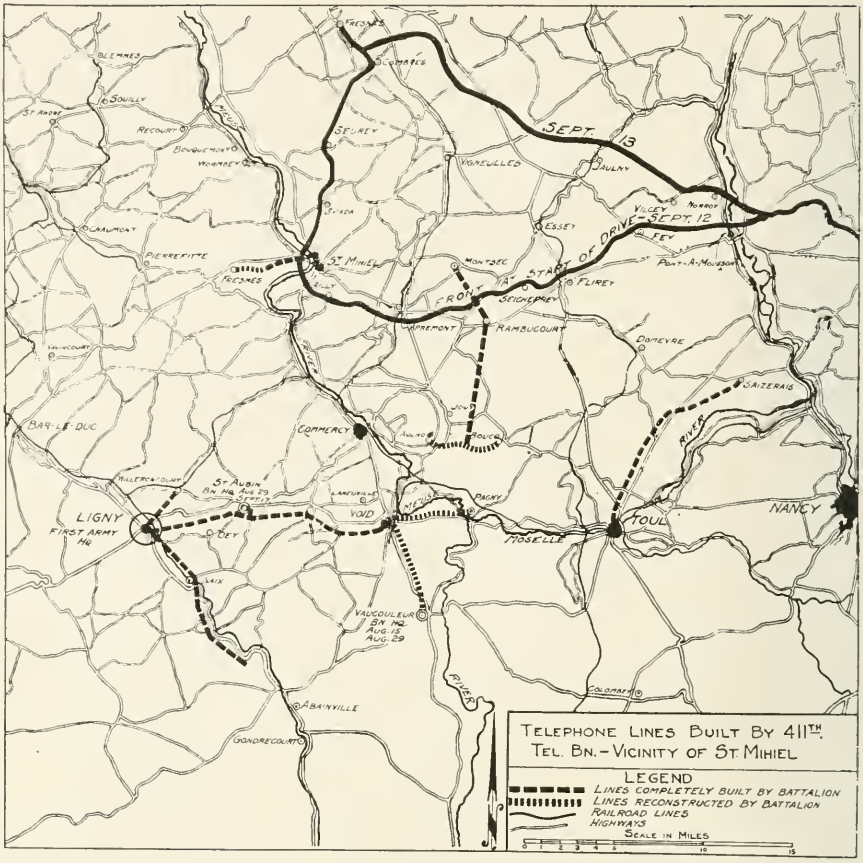
more farms. Bar-le-Duc was passed at ten in the morning and a stop was made at Houdelaincourt for lunch; here was our first introduction to a Salvation Army Hut where they were serving lemonade and hot doughnuts. There was a bargain counter rush made for the doughnuts; the corned willy which was being served by the mess sergeant went begging. In the afternoon we passed through the little village of Domrery, the birthplace of Joan d'Arc, and that evening arrived at our destination; Company E and Headquarters going into camp in a barracks just outside of Neufchateau and Company D in an air squadron's barracks near Colombey-les-Belles.

41th TELEGRAPH BATTALION, PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA, SEPTEMBER 24, 191-

X

ST. MIHIEL

THE work of the Battalion during the next month was varied and covered a large area. The First Army had officially begun functioning on August 10th and headquarters had been established at Ligny-en-Barios. Three sections of No. 1220 switchboard were installed and installation made of the necessary sub-station equipment. A 16-wire Repp construction lead was built from Toul to Saizerais, a distance of approximately 15 miles; a similar lead was built from Void to Ligny, a distance of approximately 20 miles; a 32-wire lead was built from Ligny to Willeroncourt, a distance of approximately five kilometers; wire was strung on existing French leads and existing American pole lines strengthened and additional circuits placed thereon. In fact a complete net-work for the first Army area was built up from existing lines and new construction wherever necessary. In addition to the building of lines and other plant, arrangements had been entered into whereby our Battalion was to cover a certain portion of the First Army area in the operation and maintenance of the plant. This resulted in the men being scattered over a considerable territory with consequent difficulties in housing and feeding them. The 401st Telegraph Battalion, which was the organization composed chiefly of employes from the New England Telephone Company, had been added to the units of the First Army headquarters, and worked alongside of us in the various assignments of duty. During the remainder of August and the early part of September, while we were busy every minute of the time in establishing, operating and maintaining the army net briefly outlined above, there had been preparations by every unit of all the services for the "Big Show" which everyone realized was coming off in the near future. And now let us divert our attention and see just what the Staff of our newly organized First Army was preparing for the enemy. After



the organization of the First Army, American troops practically withdrew from active fighting for thirty days. There was no pressing emergency calling our troops to the front; the Germans had not recovered from their reverses at Soissons, the Champagne, and the Marne; the British had launched an offensive against Amiens in the North; the French were attacking on the South. With the approval of the French High Command, General Pershing was planning the doom of St. Mihiel. Here we will quote from a report covering the conditions surrounding St. Mihiel, so that we may have a clearer understanding:

"When the Germans took the St. Mihiel salient in 1914

they established their line with an eye for advantageous positions which must evoke admiration from any one who sees them. In the point of the salient they held all the high ground and the French lines opposite were all below them. The Germans could see practically every time a French soldier moved, and their artillery could fire from direct observation. Almost the only low ground the Germans themselves had at the point of the salient was the town of St. Mihiel, and they kept part of the civil population in St. Mihiel so that the French would not disturb the troops there by shelling. The side of the salient running north from St. Mihiel crossed a range of hills where it joined the main battle line. On these hills the Germans were in a strong position but as the French were also on the hills, the German advantage here was not so marked. The German line on the side of the salient east from St. Mihiel ran along a completely commanding line of hills terminating in the isolated peak of Mont Sec. From there they crossed an open valley and then ran into the hills again near Pont a Mousson. The French positions in the valley would not have been so bad, if it had not been for Mont Sec. Ask any American who was there, and he will tell you that you could not wink your eye without the German observers on that cursed mountain seeing you. Every American who ever served on that part of the line has a clear picture of Mont Sec in his mind. A report of G-2 (Intelligence Section) of the 1st Corps gives a vivid picture of the St. Mihiel Salient:

"The strength of the enemy positions had for four years seemed impregnable, and had withstood in 1914 and 1915 the bloody attacks of the French at Les Eparges, Apremont and the Bois le Prethre. Such names in the early part of the war had vied in notoriety with Mons, Ypres, Louvain, Tahur, Vauquois and Verdun. They were symbolic of the days of trench warfare, in which opposing trenches were often no farther apart than ten meters; and in which mining and underground warfare played a principal part. They typified campaigns in which 100,000 lives were sacrificed to push back a trench line a few hundred meters."

"From August 21st to September 12th, American prepara-

tions for attack were ordered to be made in all secrecy. The troops were moved in at night and hidden in the woods. Traffic on the roads was ordered limited to the normal amount; the artillery and the air service were forbidden to show any unusual activity. The heavy artillery that was brought up was not even allowed to fire any registration shots. Despite all the precautions, however, it seems pretty certain that the Germans knew perfectly well that they were going to be attacked, and prisoners captured before the attack showed that they even had a fairly accurate idea of the day it was to be. Considering the dominating observation points in the hands of the enemy it was practically impossible for our own army to make preparations unnoticed. The Germans were, however, a good deal puzzled by the whole business. An officer on the staff of the German General told an American officer after the armistice that our preparations had been so easily detected that the German Staff had decided that they were a feint until almost the time of the battle. They then ordered the troops to hold the lines if attacked, but they seemed to have made little preparation to do this, and as they began removing their heavy artillery they undoubtedly weakened the morale of their troops.

"It rained hard on the night of the 11th of September; it had been raining hard for a day or two; slimy mud was everywhere. At one in the morning, the Germans were awakened by a terrible crash of artillery. For four hours the shells dropped on their trenches and dugouts, on their roads and battery positions, and for that matter, everywhere else. Particular attention was paid to Mont Sec. It was deluged with smoke shells so that its observers could not see what was going on. Then at five o'clock came the barrage and the infantry attack on the southern sector. Much of the German wire was old and a good deal of it very low. Some the Americans cut, some they just walked over. According to the habit which both sides had acquired, the forward trenches were occupied only by patrols. There was practically no resistance there. At the next line of trenches where resistance should have developed, the artillery had done so well that, in most places, there was not much either. Many Germans came out of their dugouts merely in time to surrender.

"This was the first battle under American command—certainly a most auspicious beginning. Our total casualties (including the French troops involved) were about 4,000. The German prisoners numbered 14,439 and 443 guns."

On the evening of September 11th Company D of our organization moved up and camped just back of the lines at Geronville. At daylight the next morning when the offensive started, they began the construction of a sixteen wire lead from Moulin Neuf forward to Rambecourt, a distance of approximately 11 kilometers. One circuit of this lead was extended on to Mont Sec by lance pole construction, a distance of approximately six kilometers. This work was done under exceedingly difficult conditions; the roads were blocked with traffic and it was practically impossible to haul any of the material to the route the line was to take on account of the mud. It was, therefore, necessary to carry the poles, wire and other material by hand.

On the other side of the salient Company E had been moved up to Rupt, a distance of approximately ten kilometers from St. Mihiel, the night before the engagement started. The next morning they began the construction of seven circuits across what had been for four years "no man's land" into St. Mihiel. It happened that Major C. H. Moore, Captain D. W. Scott, Lieutenant Chas. W. Smith and M. S. E. Jordan of our organization were the first Americans to enter St. Mihiel on the morning of September 13th. The civilians who were left in the town were absolutely frantic with joy; yesterday they were prisoners; today they were free. They told many tales of their long exile during German occupancy and were loud in their praise of the Americans, calling them their deliverers and saviours; the food which had been supplied by the American Relief associations had materially assisted them. French flags long buried in the bottom of trunks and other undiscoverable places were already displayed in almost every window. On the way out of the village the members of our advance party met General Pershing and his staff on the way into the newly freed town.

OFFICERS

Left to right, front row.

Major A. D. S. McCoy

Major C. H. Moore

Captain D. W. Scott

1st Lieut George R. O. Rutherfurd

1st Lieut. Elmer F. W. Niemoeller. (Only available picture of him.)

Back row

2nd Lieut. John L. Burns.

1st Lieut. Chas. W. Smith.

2nd Lieut. H. T. East

Captain A. B. Coates (Absent when picture was taken)

Taken at Fravaux, France, January, 1919.

XI

MEUSE-ARGONNE (First Phase)

WITHIN a very few days after the St. Mihiel offensive began, the commanding officer of our Battalion was "tipped off" to be ready to move within an hour's notice, as the headquarters of the First Army was going to be changed very shortly. On Sept. 17th we moved to Lemmes, a little town about fifteen kilometers north of Souilly on the Verdun road. Rumors were flying thick and fast that another "show" was to be pulled off, and we began at once preparing another net to handle the communications of the First Army whose new headquarters was to be Souilly. It had been decided that we would use, as far as possible, the lines and equipment of the French which were already in place, Souilly having formerly been one of their Army headquarters. However, this work necessitated a great deal of re-arranging and patching up of the French net to make it a satisfactory system for the handling of our heavy traffic. American switchboards were installed at many small headquarters, additional telephones installed, telegraph stations opened. It was also necessary to place telephone operators alongside the French operators to learn the location of the various lines, switchboards, etc. The reader will please keep in mind that all this work had to be accomplished in eight or nine days, as the offensive was scheduled to start on Sept. 26th. After whipping the lines of communication into shape, operating crews and maintenance crews were placed at the various headquarters and as much precaution taken as possible for everything to be in shape when the heavy load came.

When First Army headquarters had been established at Ligny previous to the St. Mihiel operation the first women telephone operators had been brought forward from Neufchateau and other points to handle the First Army switchboard. They had proven their worth and when the Army moved to Souilly they came also; in fact they had become indispensible.

What it meant to have our American girls over in France, operating an American telephone system, built by Americans, for the use of American troops, may be inferred from the following incident: A very busy officer lifted his receiver to place a call, and when he heard "Number please?" in the old famil-

GRACE D. BANKER

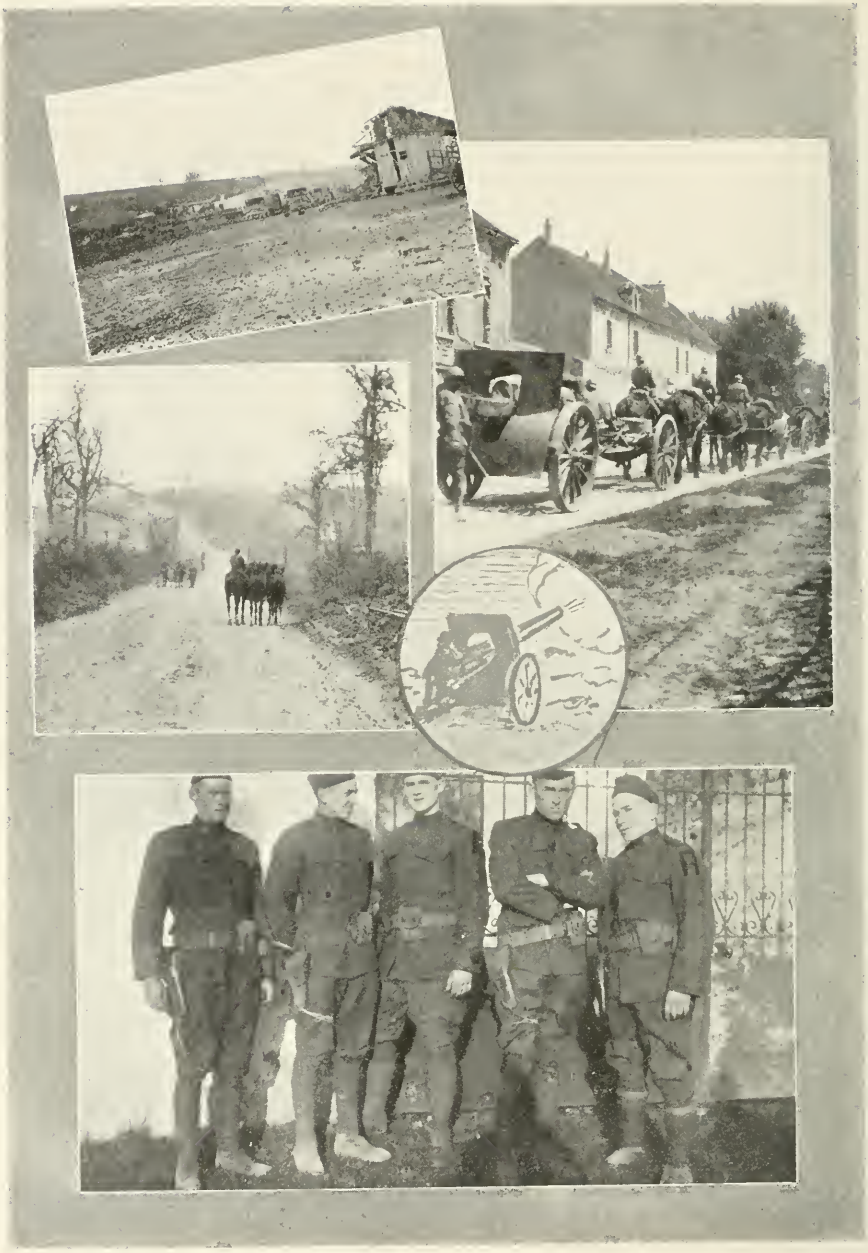
Chief Operator, First Army Headquarters during St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne offensives. It was due in a great measure to her efficiency that the operation of the exchange was so well handled. One of very few women in any of the services who received the D. S. M. which was awarded to her at Coblenz where she was acting as Chief Operator after the Armistice. Lieutenant-General Liggett personally made the award, the occasion being made one of much ceremony. Miss Banker's home address is 227 Van Houten Ave., Passaic, New Jersey.

iar way, he shouted, "Thank God you are here at last," so loudly and devoutly that everybody within hearing had a hearty laugh, including the operator at the other end of the wire. Many complimentary things have been said about the work of the young lady operators, and General Russel, Chief Signal Officer of the A. E. F., in writing of them the day after the armistice, made the following statement:

"The bringing of women telephone operators to France for service with the American Expeditionary Forces, to participate in active war service, had no precedent, and for this reason the experiment was watched with unusual interest. It pleases me a great deal to say that by your ability, efficiency, devotion to duty, and irreproachable and businesslike conduct of your affairs, personal and official, you have not only justified the action taken in assembling you, but have set a standard of excellence which could hardly be improved upon and which has been responsible, in no small measure, for the success of our system of local and long distance telephone communication."

We had opportunity of observing the work of the young ladies at First Army headquarters, and were all unanimous in the opinion that without their assistance it would have been practically impossible to have taken over the French net and made it answer the purpose of caring for our communications. In addition to all of them being thoroughly trained telephone operators, they were all fluent in speaking the French language, which was of immeasureable and indispensible value.

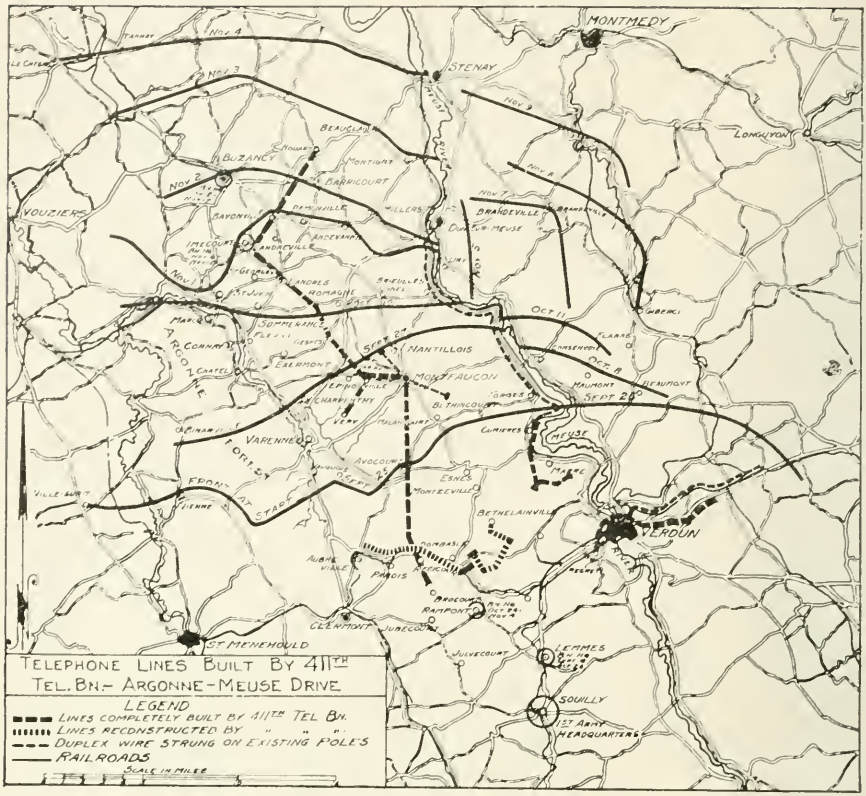
And while speaking of telephone operators, there is another group of signal corps men who have sometimes been overlooked when achievements have been discussed—the men who acted as telephone operators of small switchboards scattered here and there from the Base Hospital to the front line trench. Forced oftentimes to work under extremely uncomfortable surroundings—perhaps in a dugout with just enough room to move, and only candle light to work by—he did his work day in and day out with a degree of efficiency second to none. Of course he growled about doing "girls' work" as he called it, and always seized the first opportunity to get out of such detail: nevertheless he did a good job.



1. Camp Juvin.
2. Road near where Hickey was wounded.
3. French artillery moving through La Ferte.
4. On guard.

The Meuse-Argonne battle, fought by our First Army, was the largest battle in American history. It was a part of the great allied offensive from the sea to Switzerland which began on the morning of the 26th of September, 1918. During the time from September 13th to about September 21st more than 300,000 American troops had been moved from the rest areas, from the base ports, from St. Mihiel and other places to the front between Verdun and the western rim of the Argonne forest. These troops were moved for the most part by means of motor trucks. Unless one has actually witnessed a big troop movement of this kind, little conception can be had of just what it means. It requires approximately one thousand trucks to move the men of an American Division, allowing twenty-four men to a truck which was the average number usually carried. There were fifteen divisions moving into this area, and as one division takes up about four miles of road, not counting their own artillery, supply, ammunition, engineer trains, etc., there was upwards of sixty miles of road occupied in the movement if all had been under way at one time. It will be kept in mind also that a large movement of this kind is further complicated by the necessity of moving only during the night as the territory immediately back of the lines is approached; the success of the operation depending in a very large measure upon the degree of secrecy maintained.

"Physically and artificially the 40 kilometer front which the American Army was to attack was about the most difficult point on the western front. The Argonne Forest had been considered impregnable for four years. We accepted this verdict, also, for the plan of battle was for the French to go upon the west of it while our army went up east of it, and by outflanking it, render it untenable. The plan was not to take it by direct assault. It is a thick growth very much resembling the Wilderness in Virginia, only the Wilderness is fairly level while the Argonne is full of steep hills and ravines. The growth is like the Wilderness, the lack of roads is the same, and the character of the few roads that exist is not very different. A fair picture of the Argonne does not include the beautiful roads of France.



Across the valley of the Aire from the Argonne is another woods boasting half a dozen names but no roads running north in the direction we wanted to go. These woods were also a considerable immediate obstacle. From these woods to the Meuse the German lines were in the open but were strongly placed on the hills. On the whole 25 mile front there were only three main north and south roads—one up the Aire Valley, one from Esnes to Montfaucon, which was very poor, and one along the Meuse which could be under fire from the other bank of the river. Besides these three roads, one subject to shellfire, there was one from Bethincourt to Montfaucon, but it went diagonally across the direction of our attack, it crossed the spheres of three different divisions which made its use somewhat complicated. On the map also there are such roads indi-

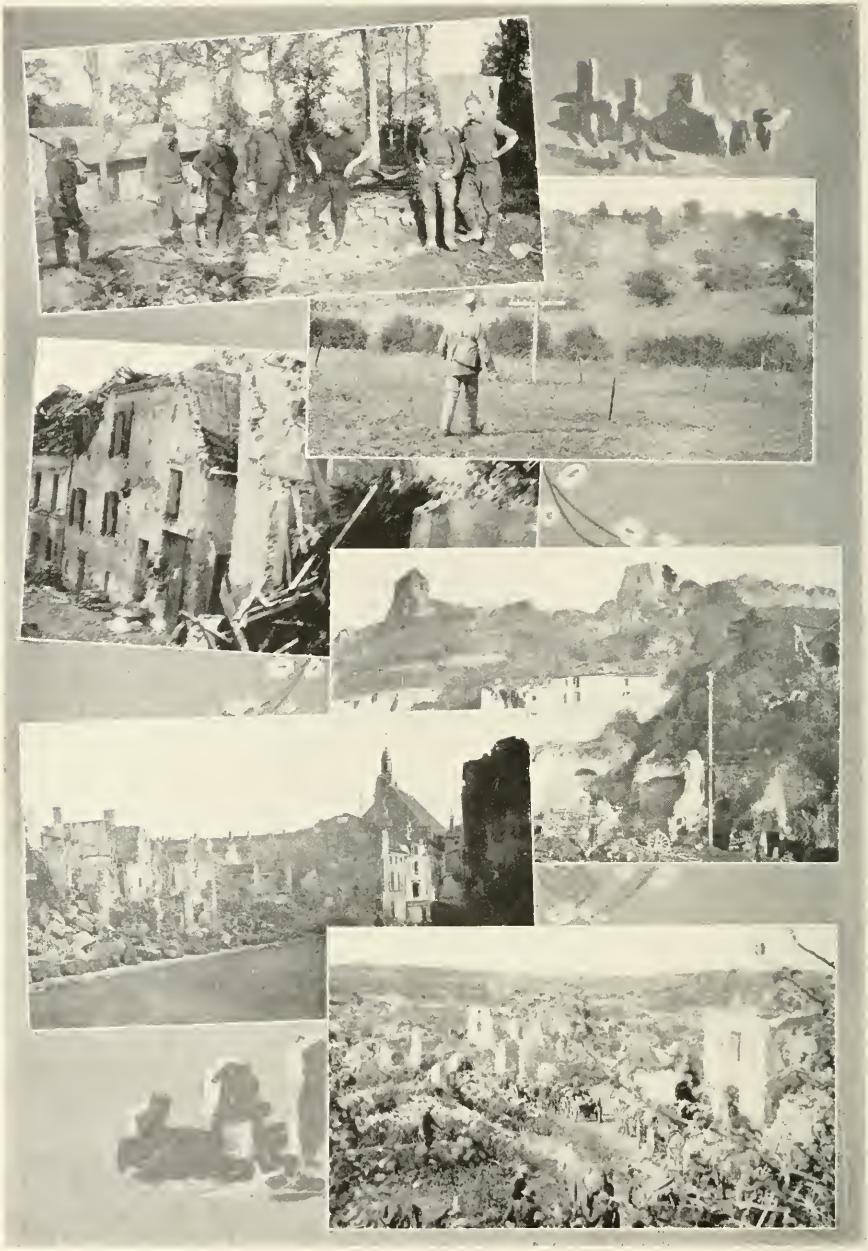
cated as the one from Avocourt to Very, but they were too poor (as the 111th learned) to be of much help. According to theory each division in combat needs a road to itself. We had nine divisions in line; our communications, therefore, should have had nine roads parallel to our advance.

The plan of attack was as follows: The V Corps was to drive straight up the middle of the country lying between the Argonne and the Meuse. It was to be the point of attack. The 1st Corps on its left was to keep the Germans busy in the Argonne and to advance up the Aire Valley to keep in touch with the main attack. The 3rd Corps, on the right, was to cover the territory between the main attack and the Meuse.

When the attack started, the 1st Corps opposite the Argonne and the Aire Valley had in line two divisions with experience, the 77th and 28th, and one green division, the 35th. The 5th Corps in the center had three green divisions in line, the 91st, the 37th and the 79th. The 3rd Corps on the right had one untried division, the 33rd, the 80th, which had had a little fighting with the Australians, and one division, the 4th, that had had experience on the Vesle. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 26th, 32nd, 42nd, the most tried divisions, were in reserve or joined the First Army later in the fight.

Six out of the nine divisions initially attacking had never been in a real battle before. The experience of the corps staffs was very limited; the army was somewhat lacking in training and experience. It was also lacking in the appliances of war. Happily this did not apply to guns. Our army had plenty of guns for the initial bombardment and after that more than could be hauled through the country. With a very few exceptions all of our guns came from the French. Up to the time the war ended practically no guns of American make had reached the front.

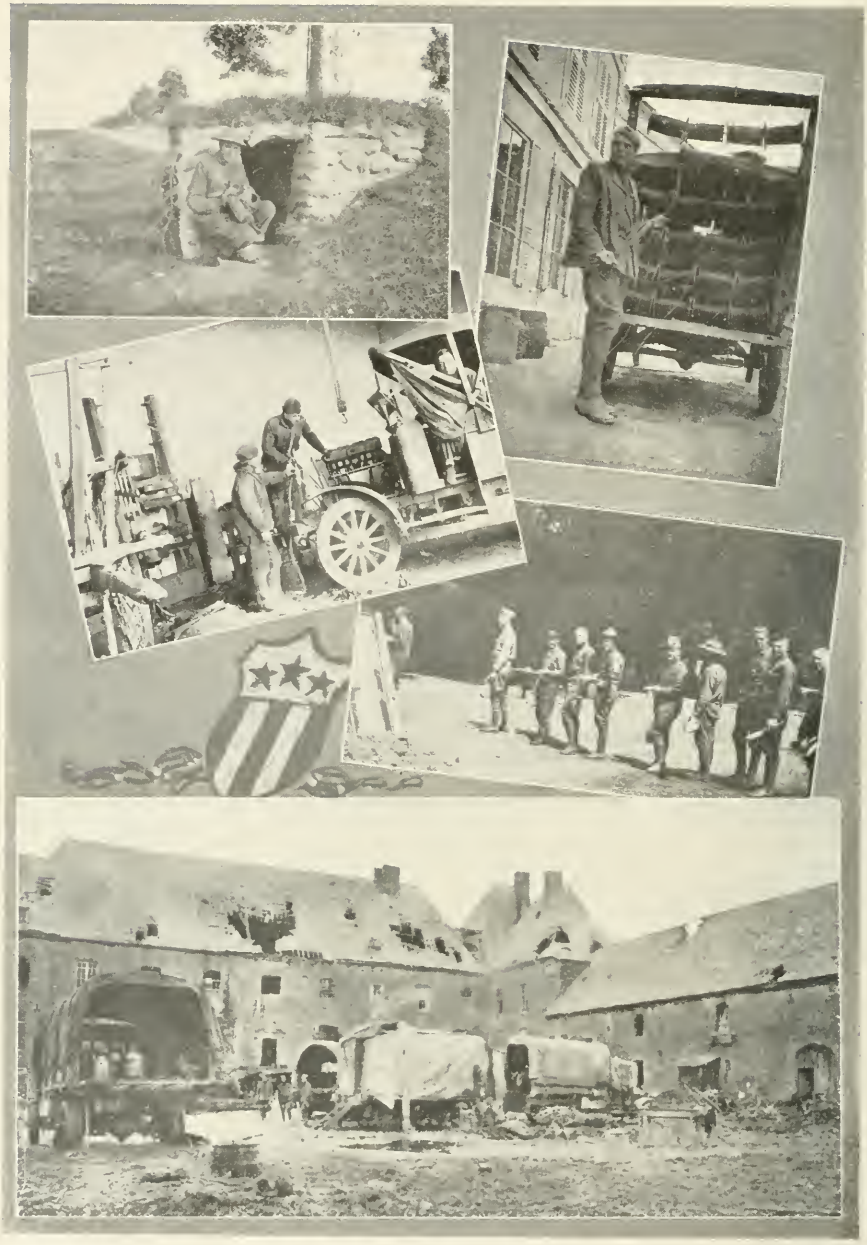
We were, then, in many ways somewhat lacking in experience and equipment. On the other hand we had numbers and a tremendous offensive spirit—'the will to victory' which the German military writers used to be so fond of writing about. This was as characteristic of the imagination and confidence of the command as it was the fighting spirit of the troops. This



1. Where kitchen was the night before.
2. Ruins Vaux.
3. Near Cheppy.
4. Ruins Chateau-Thierry.
5. Ruins Dun sur Meuse.
6. Avacourt Ruins.

Argonne-Meuse battle had a time limit to it. Its object must be gained before the main German armies had retreated from the big salient in France. It was a question of breaking every German line on that front quickly and ending the war in 1918, or fighting another year, and it is fortunate we had a General and an Army that were willing to push the fighting, pay the price and finish the war." "To Hoboken or hell before Christmas."

On September 24th our Battalion began the construction of a ten wire lead from Bois Foucheres through Recicourt in a northwesterly direction to the edge of the Forest de Hesse, and by working every available minute of daylight, hauling and distributing material at night, had completed the lead to the edge of the forest which was just behind the German front lines during the night of the 25th. This lead was to constitute the main axis of communication with First Army headquarters as the Corps headquarters advanced. That night Company D slept under their camouflaged trucks in the edge of the forest and the next morning shortly after the infantry "went over the top," was busily engaged in carrying the lead forward through the woods in the direction of Avocourt. As a temporary measure, cross arms were attached to trees through this forest and insulated wire used. Reference has been made to the condition of the roads from Avocourt to Montfaucon and Very: for the first few days they were absolutely impassable for anything except the very lightest vehicles. During the day of September 26th we were able to haul some of our line material and poles and establish a dump at Avocourt, but from that point on to Montfaucon, where the first switching point was to be established, every pound of material including the poles had to be carried on the backs of soldiers. The building of this lead across the old "no-man's land" north of Avocourt, through the Forest de Montfaucon to the "water-hole" south of Montfaucon, constituted a task which tried our men to the very limit of physical endurance. Performing the very hardest kind of work in lugging materials long distances over shell torn fields and woods heavy with mud and water, covered with almost continual rain, sleeping in recently evacuated German



1. Test station near front.
2. Hustling them in at Ligny.
3. Repairing truck.
4. Waiting for "chow."
5. Camp Imacourt.

dugouts filthy with vermin and rats, living on scant food owing to difficulty in bringing up supplies, subject to scattering shell fire in the day time and air raids at night, these men accomplished results worthy enough to be chronicled alongside of the many brilliant exploits further to the front in that long battle.

Orders had been received that this lead to the "water-hole" must be finished on October 2nd; its need being most imperative. About dusk in the closing hours of that date our men were strung out along the cluttered, traffic congested road through the forest, along which the circuits were being constructed. Some were pulling up slack, some were on tops of poles "tying in," others distributing material from the trucks, when suddenly the "put, put, put" of machine guns was heard and almost before any one of the thousands of soldiers scattered along the road and all over the adjoining area realized what was happening, a number of German planes had swooped down on a "straffing" expedition. There was a hustle for cover, the anti-aircraft guns turned loose and everyone with any kind of a weapon took a shot at the marauders. It was quickly over, and the first thought of the writer who happened to be standing at the "criss-cross roads" was "surely our former good luck will be broken and some of our men will be hit." Sure enough, in a few minutes a couple of our boys were seen coming down the road bearing a stretcher carrying "Jerry" Hurley. He had been hit by a bullet which pierced his leg just below the knee, luckily missing the bone. The wound was quickly dressed and "Jerry" was sent back to our headquarters in our own Battalion ambulance. He is the only man in our organization who was wounded in action and therefore entitled to wear a wound chevron. During his convalescence and ever after he was the most envied man in the outfit.

Reference has been made a number of times to the "water hole." This was located just at the foot of the hill south of Montfaucon. A natural spring of clear, cold water existed here and the Germans had built a small concrete building over the same, installing a gasoline pumping station. We had pre-empted this on the first day of the drive as the location for installation of our switching station. It contained facilities for

cooking, and the men who were stationed there later operating the switchboard and maintaining the lines were envied as having most luxurious, comfortable quarters, although they only had a concrete floor for a bed. It became the rendezvous of all signal corps men passing to and fro, and had the reputation of never refusing a "hand-out" as long as there was anything in the larder or any chance of foraging.

Upon the completion of the lead to the "water-hole" we immediately began the construction of a sixteen wire Repp construction lead from Very to Ivoiry, which was to fit in with the 1st Corps lead being built from the left through Cheppy. This line was built along the side of the ridge extending between the two towns. The locality was yet under observation by the German balloons and observation posts and there was almost daily shell fire, a battery of "75's" being located at the foot of one of the hills in front of Very. It was while doing this work that the saddest day in our Battalion history came. While engaged in digging holes for the pole line, "Shorty" Barker of our outfit and Sergeant Singleton of the 319th Field Signal Battalion

V. "SHORTY" BARKER

Private 1st Class with Company D; promoted to Chauffeur working as a lineman. Killed in action by explosion of German "77" shell October 25, 1918, while engaged in building telephone line near Very, France, during Meuse-Argonne offensive. Buried in cemetery neara Cheppy, France, by his comrades. Later body was removed to military cemetery near Romagne, France.

who was attached to us for duty, were instantly killed by the explosion of a "77" shell. "Shorty" had endeared himself to every officer and man in the organization by his quiet, unassuming manner and always eager willingness to do his full duty no matter where it might be. For him to be taken away from us in this sudden, unexpected manner was a terrible shock to us all: and yet everyone realized that any day any one of us might be called upon to make the same supreme sacrifice. Our dear comrade was buried in the little cemetery not far from where he gave his life to his country, and it was a sad crowd of men who again took up the toil of our daily life. Lieutenant John L. Burns, who was in command of this detachment, was knocked down by the force of the same explosion but was not injured. All of the men comprising this detachment were recommended for especially meritorious and distinguished service by the Commanding Officer of the 411th, but no awards were ever made, and like many other heroic deeds, their only reward must be the fond memory of their comrades who know of their bravery and duty well done.

During the time that this construction work was being done in the forward areas the remainder of the Battalion was scattered over the First Army area, installing switchboards, running temporary lines to ammunition dumps, air fields, etc., providing circuits to connect with existing French lines, operation and maintenance of telephone and telegraph stations.

As the American front line moved forward, we began the continuation of the main Army axis from the "water hole" or test box No. 5 to Epinonville, via Ivory in general northwesterly direction of Gesnes and Landres St. George. At a point just beyond the intersection of the lead and the main Charpentry-Romagne road, the utilization of an existing Boche pole line began, and during the remainder of the time that this axis was being extended we were constantly availing ourselves of the use of abandoned German plants.

It is not the purpose of this narrative to tell much in detail the movements of the various units of the First Army during those first two weeks of the Argonne-Meuse offensive: to do so would require volumes, and our readers who participated will desire to study the whole story from the many histories

1. Camp on Void-Ligny line.
2. As evening shadows fall.
3. Ruined French tank.
4. Moving.
5. Romagne.
6. In a shell hole.

which will be written. However, we do desire to keep in mind the general movement of our army during these last weeks. On the 10th of October the Kriemhilde defense had been reached all along the line from the Argonne to the Meuse. That defense was two and a half miles in depth; it took our Army twenty days to go that short distance. The hills around Romagne, Bantheville and Landres-St. George were the backbone of the German resistance. They were fighting to save their main line of communications, the four track railroad through Mezieres over which the men, supplies and ammunitions for a large part of the German Armies in France had to be carried. When the 30th of October came we had worn through the German Kriemhilde defenses in many places and in some places they still held the last fringe of them. But the enemy knew that they could not cling to the last defenses and that there was no other line behind them that could save the precious railroad. They also probably realized that the comparative quiet of the last days of October was preparatory to another general attack. It was during these days that we first began to hear rumors of an armistice, and while all were tired of the war's daily grind, we knew the enemy were ready to be on the run and every mother's son was keyed up to give him a good licking.

ST. AUBIN

1. Where "Push" helped.
2. Void-Ligny line.
3. Washing mess kits.
4. "SOS" for Repp materiaal.
5. Helping Poilus move out.
6. "Get the top arm through tonight."

XII

MEUSE-ARGONNE (Second Phase)

THE second phase of the battle of the Argonne was scheduled to start on November 1st. Our organization in conjunction with other Signal Corps troops of the First Army Headquarters had been working night and day to be in readiness. An incident which might have been very disastrous occurred the night before the new offensive was to start—a fire at First Army Headquarters. A number of the buildings in which important Staff headquarters were located burned to the ground. Fortunately, however, the building in which our exchange was located was saved. All of the available men were called in from all directions and by working incessantly all night, temporary lines were run into the switchboard, and while a great deal of confusion resulted, the heavy load was handled without appreciable delay.

The race of the enemy for his last line of railroad communication began when our troops "jumped off" on the morning of November 1st, and, indeed, it was a race. The German resistance of the last thirty days had disappeared and they could not stop the allied advance. Yet, their retreat was well conducted, even though rapid, and a very stubborn rear-guard resistance was maintained.

During these last eleven days of the "push" just before the Armistice, our Battalion was busily engaged in extending the center axis of communication forward in the direction of Buzzancy and Nouart. It will be recalled by the reader that there was a sudden switch in the direction of this axis after leaving Imecourt, and at the time it was perhaps difficult to understand, but it will be remembered that the Army was making a sweeping turn to the Eastward in the direction of Stenay and our line of communication was being changed accordingly. The writer will cover in a later chapter all of the detailed work performed by the Battalion during these last

1. German concrete Tank Fence Hindenberg Line.
2. Dead Man's Hill.
3. Burning Balloon.
4. Just ruins—near Avacourt.
5. Near Avacourt—road over which we traveled first day of Meuse-Argonne offensive.
6. Shell hole in billet—Chateau-Thierry.

days, but desires to touch here upon the wonderful spirit of the men in our organization during this time. They had been working up to the very limit of endurance, the weather was extremely bad, the roads most miserable, good food difficult to get up to the men, and all in all the strain was beginning to tell. However, the work in hand was being carried on with a determined effort and the writer does not believe a man in the outfit would have taken advantage of an opportunity to return to the SOS if it had been offered him. But the end was near at hand and our hard work was nearing completion as persistent rumors of the Armistice were being circulated every day. The writer was forced to leave the organization the day before the eventful day for the Hospital and therefore missed the actual rejoicing. Months afterwards (in April, 1919, just about the time the Organization sailed for the U. S.) he read an article in Collier's by Frederick Palmer, a portion of which touched upon the closing days of "America's Greatest Battle," and with apologies to him and the indulgence of the reader, the following is quoted, believing that he has covered the meat of the matter in a most interesting and entertaining manner.

On the morning of November 2 the German communique announced for the first time in the four years and more of its literary propaganda for the German people and the world, that the German line had been broken; and on that day our whole line made another spring forward on schedule time. The whaleback was ours. We looked down on the valley of the Meuse, winding toward Sedan. The survivors of the step-by-step advance in the Argonne had only to stretch their legs now. Motor trucks followed the infantry over unharmed roads, hurrying up supplies. Other motor trucks brought the reserves. Civil population in villages, uninjured except by a few shells, welcomed us. It was a march against a little artillery fire and some machine-gun fire, while we gathered in the stragglers of the many broken German divisions.

Crossing the Meuse Canal.

Our movement was now becoming fan-shaped, with our rushing divisions on our left spreading out into the sector of the French Fourth Army, and the divisions on our right gradually forming their front on the bank of the curving Meuse. Of course the 5th, on the extreme right, was the first in position for a crossing. It had to pass over the Meuse Canal after it had passed over the river. By 1 a. m. of the 3rd a patrol was across the Meuse, but was checked at the canal by machine guns, which also stopped some engineers who were trying to build a footbridge over the river, but the artillery joined in with the machine guns and forced them to dig in on the bank of the canal. However, the evening was yet young. Two footbridges were put over the canal before morning, but when small columns tried to rush across all their efforts were swept back by well-directed blasts.

1. Entrance to Verdun.
2. Verdun.
3. Dead Man's Hill.
4. Barb wire entanglements near Etain.
5. Front line dressing station near Verdun.
6. Verdun—Signal Corps "dump" on left.

At nine-thirty the next morning the army sent word that the crossing must be effected, as the whole movement of the army depended upon it. Therefore it was not in order to wait on darkness. We must get to work immediately. We should try at many points, and at some points we were bound to succeed. At Clery-le-Petite we started to make a bridge of pontoons, but the pontoons were smashed by shells almost as fast as they were put in the water; and, although the bridge was made, there was no crossing it against the hurricane of fire. A little later two battalions, attacking by surprise without artillery preparation, gained a crossing at Brieulles, and about the same time another battalion, the men used improvised rafts, or duckboards, poles, and ropes, and swimming, slipped over into the Chatillon Woods. As all the men were wet to the skin and the night was cold, action was the only means of keeping warm, and before morning they had cleaned up the woods. The next thing was to master the town of Dun-sur-Meuse. "Take the shelling and the machine-gun fire," was the divisional command. "Go through Dun and then go east. Push things along." By midday of November 5th Dun was taken. The German was being given no time to rest; and the next day the men of the 5th advanced four miles among the heights on the other side of the Meuse.

The enterprise of the 5th had forewarned the Germans what they might expect from the 90th, which had farther to go than the 5th, and had some bad ground to clean up on the way. Meanwhile a regiment of the 32d had come in between the 90th and 5th; so the "Arrows" were not out of the pursuit.

Mouth-Watering Hounds

The Germans on the bank opposite the 90th were intrenching, and while dropping gas shells on our bank their artillery was as quick as their machine gunners to concentrate their fire on our attempts at crossing. The 90th went through much the same experience as the 5th. The Texans were not in a mood to be stopped by a river now that they had tasted pursuit, and after stiff fighting they took the town of Stenay on the other side of the 10th and extended their advance to the hills beyond.

Wright's 89th, of the Fifth Corps, in the center, was keeping up with the 90th, and it found, as the 90th and as the 2d, on its left, had found, that the Germans were continuing to cover all the approaches to the river with machine-gun and artillery fire. It had been the "race-horse" 2d which had captured the German officers at a card game, and which in one of its night marches captured an officer in the midst of his inspection of his machine-gun platoon preparatory to making a strategic retreat. All the divisions were making night marches, but the 2d had particular reasons for urgency on this score, because there was the 1st in reserve pressing up for a chance—yes, it had the impudence to think that it might go through the 2d—to relieve anybody in the front line that was tired—with all the mouth-watering watchfulness of a hound waiting to pick up a bone if another hound dropped it. When it was decided that the 80th, which had been put in without sufficient time for recuperation after its service in the Third Corps, should be given a little rest in reserve, the 1st, which had been thirty-six hours at a stretch on its feet, had its ambition—as our first division to arrive in France to be in at the finish—gratified. To every man of ours the sight of that valley, as he moved downhill after he had fought an uphill fight for six weeks, was as the sight of water calling a thirsty man in the desert. The little men from the tenements, in the 77th, New York's own Liberty Division, kept forcing themselves along under their heavy packs, for it is not the habit of Metropolitans to miss a parade. As the First National Army division to arrive in France, they had just as much right to be in

1. Ready for an "alert."
2. Hunting the cootie.
3. Rolling kitchen; Cook Bruce in foreground.
4. An Army haircut.
5. Sewing on 1st Army "A's."

at the finish as the 1st—though, to tell the truth, it was not sentiment which kept a division in or took one out, but the tactical considerations of the moment. The 42nd, pressing forward for an opening with all the fervor of the 1st, went through McRae's "Jersey Lightnings" of the 78th—all honor to them and their commander: they who had shown the endurance of porpoise hide after their grueling attacks in the Grand Pre gap by making a fifteen-mile advance fighting along the edges of the Bourgogne Wood.

"Press the Enemy"

As the 42nd represented twenty-six states, it would not have paid much attention, even if its orders had been different, to army sectors when it was in full cry after the enemy on the way to the River Meuse. The report that the Rainbows had entered Sedan was due to a misunderstanding by one who read the Rainbows' message on the subject. They had entered Wadelincourt, a suburb on the other side of the river from Sedan. The difference was as that of mistaking Jersey City for New York if the North River was about a sixth of its breadth.

The French took Sedan; and that was as it should be. There was historical fitness in those veteran poilus, in their faded blue coats, being the first to enter that town where a French disaster due to a travesty of imperial leadership had glorified the Hohenzollern and his army which was now broken in retreat; and it was equally fitting too that the British veterans should take Mons, where Sir John French's "contemptibles" had shown how bravely men could die against overwhelming odds.

The 42nd side-slipped out of the French sector. On the night of November 10 the 2d and the 89th Divisions accomplished their crossing of the Meuse. The next morning we continued to advance along our whole front on the other bank, while our Second Army in the St. Mihiel sector made an attack which was a part of plans already made. As an army we had no orders yet except to press the enemy, gaining every advantage that we could. We had no official word that the armistice would be signed. One of the most convincing reasons which the Germans had for signing it—and many officers thought that the Germans might not sign it, as they still had a large army in being—was the events on the Meuse during the first ten days of November which gave us all the positions of the Meuse. On many occasions German peace talk had had no object apparently except to injure the morale of the Allied armies; and throughout the peace discussions of October it was not the business of the soldiers to be influenced by it, but to go on fighting all the harder until the order to cease firing came.

When Dreams Came True

Until eleven o'clock on November 11 the German artillery was firing at some points where we were not attacking. Instantly the message that an armistice was signed came from Marshal Foch's headquarters it was transmitted over the lines and operations were stopped as fast as units could be informed. Some small parties, working their way against machine-gun nests, could not be reached in time. Individual soldiers who were creeping forward in woods and ravines had to be warned in person before they stopped sniping at machine-gun nests which they were encircling. The 79th Division had only one more hill to take before it gained the great plain of the Woevre. When one of the advanced units received the word that the war was over a soldier exclaimed: "Hell! Aren't you going to let us take the last hill and finish the job?" The New Englanders of the 26th were fighting beside the 79th, advancing steadily after their terrible days in the battle for the heights on the east bank of the Meuse. Now we had them all except that one hill.

Oh, the happiness of that day of the armistice to one who had been four years with the war! The guns were silent—silent all the way from Switzerland to the sea; the grindings of the mill of hell had ceased. And the happiness of the succeeding days following our troops to the Rhine and in seeing King Albert enter Brussels, the British guarding the bridge at Cologne and the French in Alsace—dreams come true at every turn of the road in every soldier's face and in every face in every village! But this is not an article of impressions.

All Proved Themselves

The Meuse -Argonne battle had been won. Our army, in the course of the winning, had stretched its resources to the utmost. We had only two fresh divisions in reserve, while the French had fourteen and the British seven—which I mention to show that, although we came into the war late, we were all in at the end. Six of our National Army divisions participated in the final phase. All had proved themselves. But why think of the army in divisions when the gaps in the ranks of divisions had been filled by strangers to the localities from which they came? In order to have replacements we broke up two National Army divisions—which was a heartbreaking thing to do—and all the more so as the pressure on the lines of communication required that some of the battalions should be turned into labor troops.

Our hospitals were full. Our teams of surgeons, our divisional surgeons, our privates, our officers, all hands, were groggy with the kind of fatigue that one night's rest would not cure after that fearful six weeks' draft on their nerve energy. One does not forget the stretcher bearers, and least of all one does not forget the nurses. I mean not the women of the volunteer organizations, but the army nurses, the practical, trained women under army discipline who worked double time. They became hollow-eyed with weariness, but remained cheerful and smiling. In all the gatherings of veterans' associations they should have a place of honor.

The last construction work in the battle zone. "Deadending" the job outside of Verdun, November 20, 1918.

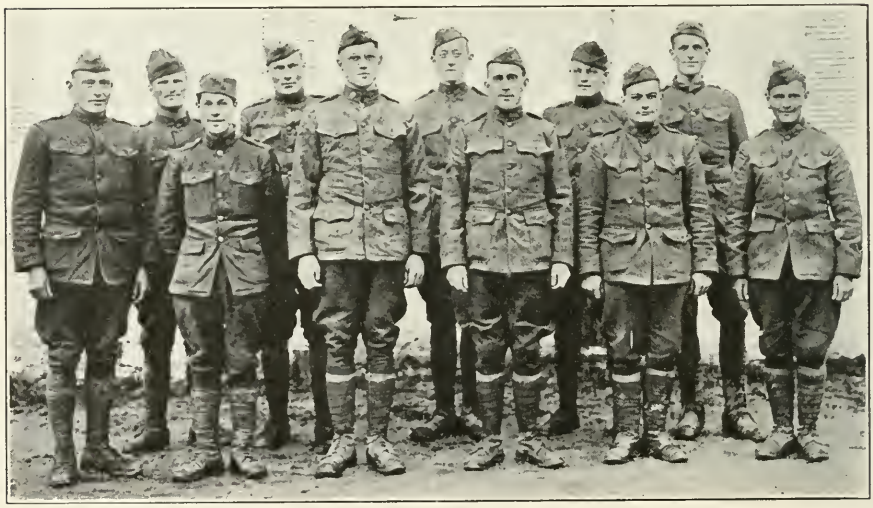
XIII

THE ARMISTICE

OUR men were scattered over a wide area on November 11th and therefore no opportunity offered for a big celebration such as was being indulged in by other organizations. The news seemed too good to be true: we had dreamed of such a time for some weeks and had visualized our desires and hopes as to just what form of expression they would take. The possibility of the report being untrue, as a similar report of a few days previous had been, clung to us: peace meant so much that we did not dare to be optimistic for fear of disappointment. Then when eleven o'clock came and firing ceased, our fears disappeared; and then in the afternoon the big observation balloons were hauled down, and as the short afternoon began fading into early twilight, the big celebration of fireworks began, we too began to find ourselves and search for something

with which to make a noise and material with which to turn the darkness into light.

A short time after the Armistice we were informed that the First Army headquarters was not going on into Germany, and that after a few days work, completing work under way, we would be moved back into a rest area. And shortly thereafter we started down the Meuse Valley to Verdun, the trip being made after dark. We will never forget that trip; it was a bright moonlight night. The valley averages a mile or so in width with the surrounding hills jutting into the flanks at irregular intervals and the Meuse river wending its way through the center. The camp fires of troops resting for the night lighted up the landscape and completed the naturally beautiful picture. It was the first time in over four years that the soldiers had had the privilege of fires at night and they were indulging it to the limit. There was light aplenty without the moon, for on all sides the victory celebration was still in progress, and the shells and vari-colored flares lighted up the sky for miles and miles. And everybody was happy; the old tenseness was gone; in its place was hilarious laughter and spontaneous raillery hurled at each other and passers-by.



XIV

AT FRAVAUX

THE new headquarters of the First Army was established at Bar-sur-Aube, which is a small village near Chaumont and some hundred and fifty miles southeast of Paris. Upon reaching Bar-sur-Aube, our headquarters was established at Fravaux, about twenty kilometers distant. Our hard working days were past and we had opportunity to rest and think it over. It would be natural to think that after the months of hard, constant work, the opportunity to take it easy would have immediately resulted in everybody becoming physically fit. The exact contrary happened, and for the first month or six weeks after reaching camp there were times when more than fifty per cent of the outfit would be marked "quarters" at sick call. However, toward the close of December, everybody began to round into shape and began to ask: "When are we going home?" During this time we had performed some small jobs in connection with the establishment of First Army headquarters, and constructed a two circuit lance pole lead for a distance of about twenty kilometers to one of the Corps headquarters. But the major portion of our time was spent: "two hours each day to physical exercise, military drill and training; two hours per day to pistol practice, study and motor mechanics school; practice march on Fridays; Battalion inspection on Saturdays." Opportunity was now afforded for men to go on leave, and during the remainder of our stay in France most of the men who desired to visit places which they had not yet seen were able to do so.

Christmas time was approaching and as our thoughts were wandering to our homeland and our families, we had to make the Holiday Spirit here in this little French village to drive away our lonesomeness. Through contributions to our mess fund which had recently been received from our friends in the Telephone Company at home, we had abundant funds to pur-

chase the wherewithal. A committee was appointed to look after the arrangements and the writer will tell about the result by reproducing a letter written by him a few days after to the friends at home who helped to make it all possible, as follows:

Christmas With the "411th"

Of course, at this Christmas time our thoughts were with our folks at home, and we were all longing for the day to come when we would again tramp on our native soil and be able to

GEORGE W. MILLER
Second Lieut. Signal Corps assigned to 111th January, 1919 at Fravaux.

stick our feet under the table with our own home people. However, do not think for a minute that we hid ourselves away with our secret yearning and let the day go by without enjoyment. As I have told you in a previous letter, Fravaux is a very small village of fifty-two inhabitants when everybody is at home; just now there are eight people away (French soldiers who have not yet been discharged from the army) and the remainder of the present population is made up of our organization. You will readily understand, therefore, that we had to make our own Christmas celebration.

We have a very good barracks building which we had set aside as the dining room; each company having their field kitchen in opposite ends of the building. A Christmas committee was appointed and the dining hall was transformed into a veritable evergreen house. A big Christmas tree was obtained, with plenty of decorations. There are no electric lights in the town, but then a little thing like that never bothers much; if what we need is not working, we just get busy and make it. Company D had found a small gasoline electric light plant in one of the dugouts at Mont Sec a few hours after the boche made his hasty retreat from that sector. With their customary destructive precaution the Germans had used a sledge hammer in an endeavor to put the engine out of commission. However, our mechanics got busy, and now we have electric lights in the mess hall and in the various offices, and have also placed some street lights, to the wonderment of the populace. Having arranged the proper stage setting for the occasion, the really big problem was to find the materials from which to prepare "the eats." Mr. Turkey is rather a rare old bird in this part of France, and the peasants guard him very closely, and I believe they must keep him with their precious jewels, because the price is about the same as gold. The committee finally picked up enough turkeys—buying one here and one there—at the rate of 8½ francs per kilo. How much is that? Well, to save you getting our your slide rule, it is approximately 75 cents per pound. Now our folks at home don't think it is much of a job to prepare the Christmas turkey—simply placing it in the patent roaster, turning on the gas, and looking at it once

in a while to see that it is properly basted. But it is quite some task to cook turkey for 225 hungry soldiers, with all of the other things that go with a Christmas dinner, on field ranges, firewood that has just been cut from the forest, and other difficulties. Our cooks are really wonders, and I will leave you to judge by giving you below the menu:

Soup—Clam Chowder
Dill Pickles
Roast Turkey, Yorkshire Dressing
Apple Sauce
Mashed Potatoes Creamed Cauliflower
Fruit Cake, Brandy Sauce
Vin Rouge (Red Wine)
Chocolate Candy Cigars
Mixed Nuts
Hot Chocolate Cigarettes

And believe me, the whole dinner was just as good as the menu looks; more than that, it was served piping hot, the kitchen police having perfected a system which worked with the smoothness of a cafeteria. Perhaps their alacrity was assisted by the fact that they all wore waxed mustaches—I presume, to imitate French waiters.

After a couple of hours' eating, the mess hall was cleared so that the seating arrangement might be changed for the "show" and moving pictures. The following programme was placed before the guests:

1. Overture ..... Battalion Jazzers
   Partridge, Kidd, Agaard and Graham
2. Vocal Solo ..... Sgt. Bartholomew C. Lally, Jr.
3. Reading ..... Parker
4. Quartette ..... Agony Four
5. Piano Solo ..... Card (3d Depot Battalion
6. Monologue ..... Candidate Morris (former Sgt. Major)
7. Vocal Solo ..... Nicholson
8. Piano Jazz ..... Wm. Burns
   (Brother of our Lieut. Burns.)

9. Monologue ..... Candidate Patterson
(Former Sgt. Patterson)
10. Violin Solo ..... Card and Close
(3d Depot Battalion)
11. Talk ..... Major Moore
12. Grand Finale, "Then We Will Know We Are Through"
Agony Four and Assemblage

After the musical programme, Professor Northrup (surgeon of light), world famous cinemographist, with his million franc machine will persuade some of his latest film successes to flit lightly across the screen. Ladies will please remove their hats, and gentlemen will leave their guns with the doorkeeper. If the show pleases you, tell others; if it does not, tell us; the management will refund your nickel and our committee on kicks will guarantee you satisfaction.

STAFF

Gilded—Major Moore, Major McCoy (surgeon), Captain Coates, Captain Scott, Lieutenant Rutherfurd, Lieutenant Niemoeller, Lieutenant Smith, Lieutenant Burns, Lieutenant East.

Nickel Plate—Stage manager, Doc Cook; electrician, Tom Burns; carpenter, Hiram Leonard; property, Ilse; music, Partridge; costumes, Geo. Meyers; wardrobe mistress, Halpin; kicks and complaints, Bevan and J. L. Johnson (heavyweight wrestler and boxer, respectively.)

Chickering piano used; shoes and costumes furnished by Madame Gouverenment.

Remain in your seats after the show; Santa Claus will come down the chimney and fill up your sock.

FINIS

You will note reference to candidates Morris and Patterson on the programme. Mse's Jordan, Harris and Sergeants Morris, Patterson and Hutchins are attending an officers' training school about fifty kilometers from here. We invited them "home" for Christmas and sent a truck for them. The President of the United States was at Langres to review troops of the First Army; but that didn't make any difference; all except Sergeant Hutchins came up here. Just mention this to

1. Fravaux, France.
2. Dining room Christmas 1918 Dinner.
3. Snow scenes, Fravaux.
4. Fresh air after "bunk fatigue."
5. Christmas, 1918.

show the old 411th spirit; they always like to get back to the organization whenever they have been gone for any length of time. Sergeant Hutchins was assigned some duty which he couldn't leave.

You will note one of the songs the Agony Four sang was entitled "Then We'll Know We Are Through." Of course there has been a lot of discussion as to when we are going home; one day one crowd will start a rumor we are to go at once; the next day another crowd will have it we are going to stay six months—so this is what they sang:

When the major gets his eagles,
  When the captain gets his leaf,
When the Mse.'s are shavetails,
  And the privates have no grief;

When they salvage our equipment
  And the Fords and Garfords, too,
When they load us on a transport,
  Then we'll know we're through.

Pretty good n'est ce pas?

The whole neighborhood of French people for miles around came to our Christmas party, and thought it was wonderful. The old lady with whom I am billeted, in telling me about it the next morning, said: "First you Americans put in telephone connection with Bar-sur-Aube, then you put in electric lights, and now you have a moving picture show. You are surely changing things in our village." Many of them had never seen a moving picture before, especially the old people and the children.

During the months of January and up to February 20th, life at Fravaux continued with the same old question: "When do we go home?" always in mind. We had succeeded in making ourselves very comfortable; every possible opportunity was given to enjoy ourselves; we had built a moving picture theatre at which nightly shows were given; had organized a band and were really having a very good time. But that was not going home, and when orders came on the last mentioned date to move to Montlouis, the announcement was hailed with joy, as

it meant at least that we would be that much nearer a port of embarkation. We had been a unit of the First Army since its organization over seven months before and it was not without many regrets that we said good bye to the many friends that we had formed during that association. At the review and inspection held a few days prior to our departure, Colonel Parker Hitt, Chief Signal Officer of the First Army, had complimented us most highly upon the record we had made, and the order covering our removal from the First Army was written in the following commendatory language.

"1. Pursuant to S. O. 31, Hqrs. 1st Army, AEF, G-3, dated February 17th, 1919, the 411th Telegraph Battalion is relieved from duty with the 1st Army, and assigned to the S. O. S. This battalion reported for duty with the 1st Army July 28th, 1918, at LaFerte-sous-Jouarre.

"2. The 411th Telegraph Battalion participated in the following operations of the 1st Army:

CHATEAU-THIERRY

"July 29, 1918, to August 8, 1918, establishing switching stations, telegraph offices and lines to Corps Headquarters.

From Producer to Consumer at Fravaux

ST. MIHIEL

"From September 12th, 1918, to September 16th, 1918, the entire Battalion was engaged in the construction, maintenance and operations of telegraph and telephone Army net work.

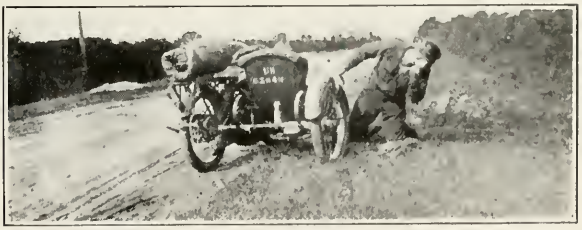
MEUSE-ARGONNE

"From September 26th, 1918, to November 11th, 1918, the entire Battalion was engaged in the construction and maintenance of main axis of the Army. Routes of axis: Souilly, Ville-sur-Cousnaces, Recicourt, Avocourt, Ivoiry, Gesnes, Landres, St. Georges, Imecourt, Bayonville, Nouart, Stenay. During this period the advance detachments of this organization were frequently under fire.

"3. The Chief Signal Officer takes this occasion to express his appreciation of the services of the 411th Telegraph Battalion while a part of the forces of the 1st Army. The untiring efforts and constant labor exerted by this organization added materially to the success of the 1st Army.

"(Signed) PARKER HITT,
"Colonel, Signal Corps, Chief Signal Officer."

A farewell party was given in our theatre the night before leaving Fravaux, and we had as our distinguished guest, Miss Margaret Wilson, daughter of President Wilson, who entertained us with her songs, and was an interested spectator during the remainder of a very delightful program.



A "BLOWOUT"

XV

MONTLOUIS

OUR new station was Montlouis, a small village just outside of Tours, SOS headquarters. Upon arrival there we were informed that we would be engaged in the repair and reconstruction of the toll lead between Tours and Gievres; upon completion of which the same work would be done on the lead from Tours to St. Nazaire; and then it was hoped that we might be released for return to the States. Complete new motor and signal corps equipment was issued to us, and all of our preparations looked as though we were booked for an indefinite stay in France, especially as no other Telegraph Battalions were being sent home at that time. However, there was a job to be done, and with the same old characteristic "411th Spirit," everybody went to it with a bang. The work was well under way and nearing completion, when, at a meeting called by Major Moore on March 17th, he informed us that the Battalion was to be relieved and prepared for early return. Like the Armistice, the news was so good, we were afraid to believe it for fear of disappointment. The next week was filled with the hustle and bustle of finishing our work and preparations to depart. On March 25th we marched down to the little town of Varetz some two kilometers distant from Montlouis to take the train for Brest. Just before boarding the cars for our last railroad trip in France we were addressed by our old Commanding Officer, Major Moore, expressing his appreciation of the loyalty shown and good work which had been done during his association with us from the time we had been called into service. He had received orders only a short time before detaching him from the organization and ordering him to Antwerp, Belgium as Chief Signal Officer, Base Section No. 9.

The writer will always look back upon this parting from his old outfit as one of the most trying days in his life. He had been associated with them from the beginning of their service

ERNEST P. IRISH

Sprained ankle during last days of Meuse-Argonne just before Armistice. Sent to Hospital and then evacuated to U. S. While on board U. S. Steamship Maui returning he was suddenly stricken with pneumonia, dying on January 21, 1919. Buried in Cleveland, Ohio, with military honors.

and knew all of their faults and virtues. It had been his constant endeavor to "write their faults upon the sands" and remember only their virtues. His parting from you all meant more to him than any of you will ever know, because even at that time it was being impressed upon him that the Spring of

B. T. WILEY

Was stricken with "flu" while on special duty in Paris, France, February, 1919. Died few days later. Buried in military cemetery at Suresness, near Paris.

1919 was the time for a man to be swinging back into civilian life if he desired to have an equal opportunity. However, a soldier must abide by the orders issued to him and he tried to be as cheerful as possible. Yet, it was a nervous, trembling Commanding Officer who stood out there under the trees on that cold, windy March morning and said his last words to you as an Organization. His heart would not stay down out of his throat and the salt water would not stay out of his eyes. The only thing that saved him from breaking down was the reading of General Gibbs' letter of good wishes, which is reproduced below. The writer in acknowledging his feelings at this time does so for the reason that he wishes each and all of his old comrades to know just how keen was his regret that he could not have the pleasure and honor of returning to our homeland with you.

200-411th Tel. Bn.

AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
HEADQUARTERS SERVICES OF SUPPLY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SIGNAL OFFICER

March 19, 1919

From: Chief Signal Officer, AEF.

To: Commanding Officer, 411th Telegraph Battalion, Signal Corps.
Subject: Separation from the American AEF.

1. On the departure of your organization for the United States the Chief Signal Officer of the American EF. desires me, in saying farewell to yourself, your officers and your men, for him, to express his deep gratification over the fact that they have conducted themselves at all times while on a foreign soil in a manner true to the traditions of an American organization.

2. Upon its arrival in France the 411th Telegraph Battalion was assigned to the important work involved in the construction of the vast net work of the system required for the lines of communication. The reputation gained by it in carrying forward this work was such that upon the formation of the 1st Army in July, 1918, the 411th Telegraph Battalion was immediately selected for assignment with this Army. The work of the Signal Corps organizations in this war has been the subject of most lavish praise by division, corps and army commanders, and our Commander-in-Chief has placed himself on record as saying that without the aid of this service the successes of our Armies would not have been achieved. The 411th Telegraph Battalion, on the record of its task well done, can looked with pride on its share in the credit reflected on this Army.

3. In their return home and to their pursuits in civil life, the Chief Signal Officer wishes that all good fortune may attend yourself and the members of your command.

GEORGE S. GIBBS,
Brigadier General U. S. A., Acting C. S. O.

XVI

RECORD OF A. E. F. WORK

IN chronicling the experiences of our outfit in the American Expeditionary Forces in the foregoing chapters, it has not been possible to mention the detailed work performed by the organization. Probably few of the men who helped to do the work realized just what was accomplished. Therefore, the following information which has been taken from the actual monthly reports rendered to the Chief Signal Officer, A. E. F., by the Commanding Officer of the 411th, in conjunction with the maps which appear heretofore, will give the reader a clear conception and serve as a reference when any particular feature may be under discussion with his buddies. Only the period from March, 1918, to March, 1919, inclusive has been reproduced here, as that period covered our actual work "over there" and serves the purpose of this chapter.

March, 1918

On board transport at sea. Arrived in Brest harbor morning of March 4.

Sent freight and baggage detail ashore to care for Battalion property.

Battalion disembarked, marched to Pontonezen barracks.

In barracks at Pontonezen where men washed clothing and bathed.

Practice march, about seven miles.

Entrained at Brest 11:30 a. m. Arrived at the present station (Savenay) March 12th.

Billetting and establishing camp.

Entire Battalion engaged in construction of new telephone and telegraph line. Ordering material and tools, hauling and distributing material, framing and hauling poles, surveying and staking line, and obtaining right of way.

ENGLAND
ENGLISH CH.
HOLLAND
BELGIUM
GERMANY
PAS DE CALAIS
NORD
SOMME
SEINE INFERIEURE
AISNE
ARDENNES
DUCHE DE LUXEMBOURG
CALVADOS
EURE
SEINE ET OISE
SEINE ET MARNE
MARNE
MEUSE
MEURTHE ET MOSELLE
ORNE
EURE ET LOIR
AUBE
HAUTE MARNE
VOSGES
FINISTERE
MORBIHAN
FRANCE
SARTHE
YONNE
HAUTE SAONE
COTE D'OR
DOUBS
INDRE ET LOIRE
NIEVRE
CHER
INDRE
VENDEE
DEUX SEVRES
VIENNE
SAONE ET LOIRE
JURA
SWITZERLAND
ALLIER
CHARENTE
PUY DE DOME
LOIRE
RHONE
AIN
HAUTE-SAVOIE
BATTALION TRAVELS IN FRANCE

April, 1918

Headquarters and supply established at Savenay.

Company D headquarters established at Savenay. Company engaged in completing survey of telegraph and telephone line from Le Cornais on highway via Bovee and Lavau to a point approximately three miles east of Montoir, thence along right-of-way of P. O. railroad via Montoir to St. Nazaire, a total distance of approximately 19 miles. Holes were dug and poles completely equipped for 10-wire lead set. A second cross arm was placed on pole lead from Montoir to St. Nazaire to take care of local circuits. This is a distance of approximately four and one-half miles. In addition to above the necessary arrangements with reference to right-of-way were made as line proceeded: an interpreter arranging with the French inhabitants and explaining each thing that was done in order that a spirit of friendliness and helpfulness with them might be established and maintained. Trees trimmed along entire line so as to provide proper clearance. Survey of leg from Lavau to Savenay made—a distance of approximately four miles.

Company E headquarters established at St. Etienne. Company engaged in completing survey of telegraph and telephone line from Le Cornais on highway via St. Etienne, Coveron and St. Herblain to a point on the right-of-way of the P. O. railroad, known as Roche Maurice Crossing; thence along said right-of-way to connect with pole line of the Postes Telegraph and Telephone, a total distance of approximately 19 miles; thence on P. T. & T. pole line to signal office at No. 19 Rue de Sebastapole, Nantes, an approximate distance of two and one-half miles.

Holes were dug and poles completely equipped for 10-wire lead set.

Same care exercised as to dealings with French inhabitants as indicated in report on D Company.

Trees trimmed along entire right of way so as to provide proper clearance.

Recommendations: The personnel of this Battalion is composed of men qualified to do the class of work in which now engaged—which we believe is the work contemplated for base

line signal troops as outlined in Signal Corps Drill Regulation 1917, Part VI. However, the entire training period of this Battalion was consumed in training for the duties of a telegraph battalion, I believe more efficient results could be obtained if more time during training period were devoted to the training of men as to construction methods, line work, etc. If the telegraph battalions were given this additional training they would be qualified to do either base line or telegraph battalion duties. Telegraph operators and specially qualified signalmen should be trained separately and furnished telegraph battalions as required.

The working strength of this Battalion is approximately 80 per cent of that contemplated in tables of organization. This is due to absentees on detached service. If this plan is to be continued, it is recommended that the strength of each company be increased by 25 additional men. The present strength of officers and non-commissioned officers is sufficient to care for this increase.

May, 1918

The duty performed by the 411th Telegraph Battalion during the month of May was:

Completed construction of a 10-wire toll lead from Nantes to St. Nazaire, including the placing of all transposition and phantom brackets.

Five circuits of No. 17 bronze wire strung on second cross

arm from Montoir to St. Nazaire, a distance of approximately five miles.

Leg from Lavau to Savenay, a distance of approximately four miles constructed, ten pine crossarms placed thereon. Two circuits of No. 12 copper looped on Lavau-Savenay leg and all transposition and phantom brackets placed.

A 22 pair No. 14 duplex cable was constructed from terminal pole in St. Nazaire to switchboard to care for five toll line circuits and five local circuits to Montoir with two extra pair to care for trouble. Toll circuits on Savenay leg carried into switchboard at Base Hospital No. 8 by duplex cable.

Toll test panel installed in Signal Office at Nantes, and toll circuits brought into same by duplex cable.

Before turning over the completed job of the Nantes-St. Nazaire and Lavau-Savenay toll lines to operating department complete tests were made so as to be absolutely sure line was free of all trouble or interference. Only two or three minor cases of trouble were found (mostly in French contact pairs) and after this trouble was eliminated, line talked exceedingly well.

After completion of Nantes-St. Nazaire project, acting in accordance with orders received office Chief Signal Officer, arrangements were made to string five toll circuits on the lead, east of Nantes to Beaupreau, a distance of approximately 41 miles. In order to complete this work during the time specified by office Chief Signal Officer from May 20th to May 25th,

it was necessary to work from daylight until dark. Work was completed and lines connected through to Tours at 3:30 P. M. Saturday, May 25th.

Time from May 25th to May 31st consumed in moving Battalion to new station at Versailles.

June, 1918

Duties performed by the 411th Telegraph Battalion during the month of June, 1918.

Headquarters and Company "E" established at Camp Satory, Versailles. Company "D" established at French artillery barracks, St. Germain en Laye.

In accordance with instructions office Chief Signal Officer, a survey of a 24 wire (4-6 pin crossarms) telegraph and telephone line was made from La belle Epine to Ham, where a junction was to be made with the British. After all available routes had been carefully considered it was recommended that line be constructed on highway and that we build joint with the existing French lines whenever it seemed advisable to do so. This plan was approved by office Chief Signal Officer. Accordingly line was surveyed along highway from La belle Epine to Ham, a distance of approximately 33½ miles. After preliminary survey was completed, the 405th Telegraph Battalion was ordered on job to construct that portion of line between Versailles and La belle Epine, a distance of approximately 12 miles. Field notes containing preliminary survey of this portion of line turned over to Major Kick, commanding the 406th Telegraph Battalion.

Arrangements were made with the French Poste T. & T. to furnish the necessary fixtures for the purpose of placing their wires on such portions of the lead where we were to construct a joint lead. Owing to a scarcity of these fixtures same had to be obtained in many different places, necessitating long hauls by motor trucks. Arrangements also made for obtaining necessary poles from French for lead, together with necessary wire for the third and fourth crossarms.

Owing to contour of country at St. Germain and difficulties which could not be overcome in building line through town, it was decided to use cable through a railroad tunnel at this

point. This obviated the necessity of building lead through the forest of St. Germain, which would have been impracticable from maintenance standpoint. The necessary special toll cable (2483 feet) for this job was obtained from the French, together with necessary fixtures, terminal boxes, etc., for its installation.

The highways along the route of this lead are lined on both sides by at least two rows and in many places four rows of trees for practically the entire distance. For this reason, it was found necessary to move French lead in most instances to provide proper clearance.

Pole line equipped with four 6-pin crossbars was constructed for entire distance from Versailles to railroad crossing at Conflans, from which point to Ham (junction point with British), a distance of approximately four miles, three arms were placed. A total of approximately 300 poles of new construction was placed in this lead. New poles were also placed where French poles were defective. Spans in French lead were replaced where necessary and entire lead moved and strengthened as conditions were found necessary. Guying of entire lead completed.

Twelve wires of No. 12 172 lb. copper placed on 1st and 2nd crossarms. Twelve wires of French wire (approximately 155 lb. copper) placed on 3rd and 4th crossarms in accordance with instructions office Chief Signal Officer.

Tree trimming over entire lead completed.

405th Telegraph Battalion replaced by 403rd Telegraph Battalion on Versailles-La belle Epine portion of line, on June 24th. Such motor equipment and tools as could be spared were turned over to them and such assistance as possible given them in getting started to work.

Instructions received office Chief Signal Officer as to buildings for switching office and installation of equipment therein at La belle Epine. Preliminary surveys made and arrangements for obtaining material and equipment begun.

Portion of line assigned this Battalion from Versailles to Ham completed, except the placing of transposition brackets and a small amount of cleaning up. Placing of transposition brackets delayed account same not being available. Instruc-

tions were received from office Chief Signal Officer that this line should be completed by June 30th. In order to accomplish this result it had been necessary to work the entire Battalion from six A. M. to nine P. M. for last ten days of month.

July, 1918

July 1st to 6th engaged in the placing of transposition brackets on 24 wire lead from Versailles to contact with British at Ham. This work not completed by June 30th, owing to fact that transposition brackets not available. Circuits in this section of the lead were also tested out with British and their Marines test station, and miscellaneous cleanup work done during this period.

July 7th to 13th, line crews of the Battalion assigned to assist the 403rd Telegraph Battalion in stringing wire between Versailles and La belle Epine.

July 6th to 27 approximately 25 men of Company E engaged in the construction of an operating room, garage and barracks at La belle Epine. The exchange building was constructed of the Adrian barrack lumber furnished, and in order to provide proper clearance for the equipment to be placed, it was deemed advisable to construct the building two feet higher than regulation Adrian barracks. A concrete floor was laid in this building with a slab of concrete 3 inches thick (1-3-5 mixture) and a finish one inch thick (1-2½ mixture). The

roof and sides of this operating room were covered with tar roofing paper 9 inches in thickness. A three inch clearance was provided beyond the outside edges of the wooden structure to permit the construction of a permanent structure around the wooden structure, thus providing for the protection of the equipment. This wall is sufficiently strong to support a substantial two story structure. The garage and barracks were erected of the Adrian barrack material furnished, reinforced in the weak places so as to assure the structure standing up under the heavy wind and rain storms which are of more or less frequent occurence in this locality. An engine base of concrete was placed in the garage and two storage battery charging and two lighting sets mounted. A part of the plan of the La belle Epine office project involved the use of the French underground cable from this point to Paris. Permission was obtained from them to build a manhole directly across the road from the operating building. A trench was tunneled under the highway to the proposed distributing frame in the operating building and four single tile ducts laid in this trench, which was two feet wide, with a four inch layer of concrete underneath, and a two inch layer over the tile. The ducts were buried approximately one meter at the entrance of the exchange and graded down to a depth of two meters at the manhole. Three sections of cable were pulled in. The manhole was covered with a slab 7 inches thick of concrete. The necessary

duct runs were also provided from the cable frame to the distributing frame, to the engine room where the power plant is to be located and to other points where it was apparent they would be required. In order to provide a temporary switching and test station a toll test panel was installed in a building across the street, the circuits from La belle Epine lead being brought into this panel and thence to the underground cable by twisted pair.

July the 13th the Battalion moved station Versailles and St. Germain to Boissey St. Leger and Brie Comte Robert, "D" Company being established at the latter place and Headquarters and "E" Company at Boissy St. Leger.

July 15th to July 27th Battalion engaged in the survey and construction of a 10 wire lead from La belle Epine to the east limits of Guignes, a distance 39 kilometers. The work completed on this line up to July 27th is as follows: La belle Epine to Villecresnes—holes dug and poles set to stakes No. 336 with the exception of 8 poles between 245 and 254 and 14 poles in the village of Brevgnes. Crossarms placed to pole No. 169. Guys placed to pole No. 136. Villacresnes to Guignes—597 poles crossarmed (complete and delivered to stake); 274 holes dug and poles set; 29 guys placed approximately 50% of tree trimming completed.

Acting in accordance with O. C. S. O., a surveying crew was furnished for the purpose of surveying and staking lead from east limits of Guignes to Provins—portion of Chaumont-Paris lead to be erected by the 416th Ry. Tel. Bn. Complete survey made and field books furnished to the 416th; also transposition data sent to office Chief Signal Officer.

On July 19th the last section of lines on the La belle Epine-Ham lead was turned over as completed. Acting with accordance O. C. S. O. arrangements were made to make the necessary tests with the British at Marines to determine if the circuits were all in the clear and ready for cut over. Upon making tests it appeared that there must be some transposition errors and a crew of engineers and linemen were sent over the line for the purpose of checking. A large number of errors and faults were found and a crew of 16 linemen put on to clear same. Work was completed on July 24th and arrangements made with Brit-

ish to cut over the circuits at noon, July 25th. This date was kept and circuits cut into service that afternoon.

July 29th Battalion moved from Boissey St. Leger and Brie Comte Robert to Headquarters 1st Army. July 30th and 31st consumed in cleaning up billets and getting settled in same.

August, 1918

August 1st to 8th stationed at La Ferte. Company "E" engaged in surveying, staking and digging holes for a toll line from La Ferte to Chateau-Thierry. Balance of company engaged in making telephone installations at Headquarters 1st Army and the necessary work in switchboard room. Men also assigned to take care of trouble and act as wire chiefs and switchboard men. Moved detachment 18 men and one officer Company "D" to Chateau-Thierry for purpose of making switchboard installation. Installed switchboard and established telegraph office. Balance of Company D engaged in building several small lance pole lines and testing out French circuits on railroad from La Ferte to Chateau-Thierry. August 6th moved balance of Company "D" to Chateau-Thierry, engaging them in the installation of telephones in Chateau Thierry and the building and maintenance of lines to 1st and 3rd Corps headquarters. August 9th moved Headquarters and Company "E" to Chateau--Thierry. August 9th and 12th engaged in surveying and laying out contemplated toll line routes from Chateau-Thierry north to Fare-en-Tardenois and Coulongs. Part of plan involved using abandoned German pole lines in this territory and French lead along railroad from Chateau-Thierry to Armentieres.

August 12th and 13th consumed in moving entire Battalion overland by motor transportation from Chateau-Thierry to Neufchateau as per par. 1, S. O. 32, Hq. 1st Army. Company "D" upon arrival was sent direct to Colombey-les-Belles. August 14th to 17th detachment of six men Company "E" engaged in maintenance work Neufchateau.

August 15th moved Headquarters and "E" Company to Vaucouleurs.

August 17th to August 28th Company "D" engaged in making switchboard installation at Artillery Headquarters.

Neufchateau, an additional section of switchboard at Colombey-les-Belles and switchboard for Meteorological Bureau at latter place and surveying, staking and constructing a 16 wire Repp lead from Toul to Saizerais, a distance of approximately 18.2 kilometers. This lead was built on private right-of-way from No. 150 to 200 yards from highway, poles placed 132 feet, storm-guyed every 12 poles, double crossarms at all storm-guy poles, test pole placed in center of line, poles graded to uniform length of 5½ meters, 3 meters being used at all railroads and road crossings where possible to obtain, poles set 4 feet in ground. Extremely difficult digging was experienced on this job, formation being a very heavy shale rock, necessary to blast about one-third of holes.

August 17th to August 31st "E" Company engaged in making switchboard installations at Void and Ligny—one additional section of 50 line board being installed at latter place. Installation of telephone lines made at Headquarters of 1st Army and a sufficient crew established for the proper maintenance and construction of all work at 1st Army Headquarters. Balance of "E" Company during this period engaged in sur-

veying, staking and constructing a 16 wire lead from Void to Ligny, a distance of approximately 25 kilometers. Lead constructed on the same specifications as Toul-Saizerais line as detailed in Par 5. Same type of digging experienced and necessary to blast about one-third of holes. Material for this work all had to be hauled from Toul, a distance of 30 to 50 kilometers.

August 28th moved "D" Company to camps along highway near Void and Menil-la-Mofgne to assist in completing Void-Ligny lead. August 31st received instructions to station "D" Company at Void. August 29th and 30th three wire detachments of "D" Company strung 2 No. 12 copper circuits on existing lead from Void to Vaucouleurs, a distance of 6.7 miles. Transposition brackets placed and circuits phantomed. August 29th moved Headquarters and "E" Company to St. Aubin.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From observation it is apparent that little attention is given to the training of telephone operators in field and telegraph battalions. Under present conditions good telephone operators are equally important as telegraph operators. Full efficiency cannot be obtained from circuits when the operating force is untrained and inefficient. It would be my recommendation that the training of telephone operators (male) be given most careful attention, and officers also trained for their supervision. If officers, provided with definite, well defined written traffic instructions, could be trained for duty and detailed in specific areas, the volume of business which could be handled over existing circuits would be very greatly increased and the satisfactory service obtained of immense value.

The work of a telegraph battalion is such that they must of necessity move from place to place very often: the saving of transposition is a very great factor, and a sufficient number of pyramidal tents should be provided to house the entire battalion. Small sections could then be camped in vicinity of work and more efficiency gained. In summer months, shelter halves can be used to advantage, but during winter months they will not prove adequate for working parties. The moving into and out of billets takes time and the sanitary conditions is an im-

portant factor to be always kept in mind. It is recommended that sufficient tentage be added to equipment of telegraph battalions to provide shelter for entire organization.

It is most urgently recommended that the motor transportation as called for in Tables of Organization be provided telegraph battalions. Keeping transportation in running order under the conditions which prevail, is difficult and full efficiency of the organization cannot be obtained if the full quota of motor vehicles is not supplied.

September, 1918

September 1st to September 11th built standard 6-arm lead from Ligny to Naix, approximately 6 kilometers, and rebuilt old pole line from Naix to a point just north of Demange, a distance of approximately 8 kilometers, on Gondrecourt-Ligny

road. Three No. 12 copper circuits were strung the entire distance and one 8-pin Repp arm placed with No. 19 bronze to care for existing circuits. The work was completed September 11th.

From September the 6th to September the 8th, built two No. 19 bronze circuits on 4-pin crossarms on French lead from Ligny to Maulan, a distance of approximately 5 kilometers.

September 10th to 14th built a 32-wire, 4-8 pin Repp arm lead from Ligny to Willeroncourt, approximately 5 kilometers.

September 8th to 9th, placed one 8-pin Repp arm on existing lead from Moulinneuf with four No. 19 bronze circuits to Boucq, a distance of approximately 5 kilometers.

September 10th and 11th, placed one 8-pin Repp crossarm and strung four No. 19 bronze circuits on existing lead from Void to Pogny, approximately 7 kilometers.

September 13th to 17th, built pole line with two 8-pin crossarms and eight No. 19 bronze circuits from Moulinneuf to Rambecourt, a distance of approximately 11 kilometers. One circuit of this lead extended on to Mont Sec by lance pole construction, a distance of approximately 6 kilometers.

September 12th to 16th, extended from French pole lead from Rupp to St. Mihiel, a distance of approximately 10 kilometers. Seven circuits were strung on this pole lead, using French equipment and material, except about 100 poles and 75 kilometers of wire which we furnished.

Foregoing comprises principal work performed from September 1st to September 16th. However, during this period a great many smaller jobs were performed such as stringing twisted pair to connect with existing circuits, installing telephones, surveying, testing and clearing trouble on existing French circuits, maintaining the whole plant and other necessary work incidental to a telephone and telegraph battalion.

September 17th, moved Headquarters and "E" Company from St. Aubin and "D" Company from Void to Lemmes, entire battalion taking station at latter point.

September 18th, began installation of two 50-line magneto switchboards at Souilly, together with a roll test switchboard. Began installation of telephones required by departments.

September 18th, surveyed and staked a 16-wire Repp lead from Osches to Julvecourt, a distance of approximately 4 kilo-

meters. Seventy holes were dug when orders were received to abandon project.

September 19th, two 40-line switchboards installed at Evres.

September 22nd, 20-line switchboard installed at Froidos, consolidating lines which had previously been served on three small switchboards.

September 24th, work began on construction of Repp lead from Bois Fougheres to Montfaucon, a distance of approximately 15 kilometers; four circuits to be placed on crossarms and two circuits knobbed on poles. Owing to bad condition of roads and extremely heavy traffic on same, it was not possible to haul material farther than Avocourt, the poles and other material for this 7 kilometers of line from Avocourt to Montfaucon being carried in by man power. Work of this lead to be completed night of October the 2nd.

September 28th, 12-line switchboard installed at Fleury.

The work detailed above constitutes principal construction work performed for period September 18th to September 30th. However, there had been 15 other small jobs in the nature of stringing twisted pair to provide network for Army lines in conjunction with existing French lines.

Army network of lines maintained from Headquarters 1st Army to Corps Headquarters, together with necessary details to handle maintenance of outside and inside plants at Souilly and Ligny.

October, 1918

Completed 8-circuit Repp lead from Bois Foucheres to Montfaucon, a distance of approximately 15 kilometers, began on September 24th, supervising distribution of circuits to Fifth Corps.

Built 8-circuit Repp lead from Very to Ivoiry, a distance of approximately 5 kilometers. This work was performed under extremely bad road conditions and a greater portion of material had to be carried in by man power.

Lead of 8 circuits built from Aubreville to Dombasle, a distance of 9 kilometers. This lead parallels the Verdun-Clermont national highway and railroad. Owing to shortage of

poles and Repp material, it was decided to utilize the former French railroad lead. This pole line had been considerably damaged by shell fire and bombing raiding parties; however, by a redistribution of the available French brackets and obtaining additional brackets from the French, we were able to reconstruct approximately two-thirds of the distance of the lead. Remaining portion of lead constructed by placing two 8-pin Repp arms on existing poles along railroad highway.

Lead of 4 circuits on one 6-pin Repp arm constructed on existing French pole line from Dombasle to Bethlainville, a distance of approximately 5 kilometers.

Constructed eight circuits to Repp arm pole line from a point known as Test Box No. 5, one kilometer south of Montfaucon to Epinonville via Ivoiry, a distance of approximately 6 kilometers.

Constructed four circuits one Repp arm pole lead from Magazin to a French central located west in woods near Post de Bruyeres to an artillery P. C., located just north of Cumieres. Length of line approximately 10 kilometers.

Reconstructed entrance of three French leads into Souilly so as to permit the building of engineer's barracks.

Engineering, set poles and strung messenger for outside cable distributing plant at Souilly.

Rebuilt one mile of a 2-arm Repp 8-circuit pole line just west of Bethlainville so as to provide proper clearance for aeroplanes on new air field under construction.

Began construction of lance pole omnibus line for use of road engineers from Varrenes to Romagne; ultimate terminal, Landres St. Georges. Line completed as far as crossroads entering Gesnes, where work had to be suspended account enemy shell fire.

Continuation of 2-arm Repp lead surveyed from point where lateral lead, mentioned in Par. 6, ends at Epinonville in general northwest direction of Gesnes and Landres St. Georges. Pole lead constructed about half way between Epinonville and Themain Charpentry-Romagne route where it joins Boche pole line. Work suspended at this point for present.

The foregoing comprises the principal construction work completed during the month, but in addition there has been a

total of approximately 16 small jobs in the nature of stringing twisted pair to serve ammunition dumps, etc., and to provide the lines for connecting with existing French lines of communication.

Survey made of standard 10-pin, two crossarm 8-meter pole lead from Souilly to Very, a distance of 106,903 feet, 32.585 kilometers or 20.2 miles. Survey follows as near as possible a straight line from Souilly to point just north of Julvecourt where it crosses the highway to the plateau about one-third of a kilometer west of said highway; thence in a straight northwesterly direction to a crossing of the Verdun-Aubreville highway just east Aubreville; thence across the western edge of the Forest de Hesse; thence in practically a straight northerly direction to Very. Complete field notes made up, together with route map, line staked and ready for construction crews to start work as soon as orders are issued.

From October the 1st to October the 15th, a total of 65 men of "E" Company of this organization engaged in main-

tenance of Army network of lines from Headquarters First Army to Corps Headquarters, together with other necessary details to handle maintenance and installation work at Souilly and Ligny. On the latter date, this work was taken over by the 319th Field Signal Battalion. Under date of October the 25th, details were placed at various points for maintenance of main axis lines of communication, consisting of a total of 20 men.

November, 1918

Rerouted 9 circuits No. 17 copper from railroad right-of-way to main road at Dombasle for a distance of 20 spans.

Reconstructed 8 circuits No. 17 copper from Romagne to Gesnes and 4 circuits No. 14 iron for 40 spans west of Gesnes.

Reconstructed 8 circuits No. 17 copper on German lead from point half way between Epinonville and Gesnes to Landres St. Georges, continuing the 4 circuits from Landres St. Georges to Nouart by way of Immecourt, Bayonville, Remonville and Barricourt.

Reconstructed 4 circuits No. 17 copper on German lead from Buzancy to Nouart.

Constituted and reconstructed one circuit from Regret to Dun-sur-Meuse along railroad for railroad operation line, also from Verdun to Varrennes Tunnel, placing instruments in all railway stations and installed one 12-line switchboard in depot at Verdun.

Recovered 135,000 feet of No. 17 twisted pair wire in Chatel Chehery and on road from Chatel Chehery to Chatel la Forge; also recovered 75,000 feet of main axis of line from Gesnes to Landres St. Georges.

The foregoing comprises the principal construction work completed during the month, but in addition there has been a total of nine small jobs in the nature of string twisted pair for local installations.

Detachment of 30 men from Company "E" engaged in maintenance of telephone and telegraph lines from Ville-sur-Cousance to Nouart and on load from Cheppy and Ivoiry.

December, 1918

Complying with instructions, Chief Signal Officer, 1st Army, a two circuit lead of No. 17 bronze wire was constructed from Montigny-sur-Aube to La Ferte-sur-Aube from which point the 401st Telegraph Battalion carried construction to Bar-sur-Aube. The total length portion of line built by this battalion was 16.5 kilometers; 12 kilometers of same built on existing French pole lead; the remaining four and a half kilometers constructed by placing a 4-pin Repp arm on lance poles. Lance poles were spaced at 100 feet; at intervals of every 1000 feet "A" fixtures were constructed to add to the strength of the lead, storm guys being also placed at every fifth pole. Physical transpositions were placed; the portion built by this battalion making one complete "A" section and transposed as on 29-10 of a 10-pin arm scheme.

Entire battalion in training at Fravaux during month; two hours each day devoted to physical exercise, military drill and training, and two hours per day to pistol practice, study and motor mechanics school; practice march on Fridays; battalion inspection on Saturdays.

Six linemen of battalion on special duty at Bar-sur-Aube during month, taking care of telephone installations, maintenance, etc.

During month a total of 30 men and 4 officers have been sent on 7 day leave of absence.

The heavy truck equipment of this organization, consisting of 12 Garfords, 3 Federals and 2 Quads, have been in constant, continuous service since March. All of these trucks were

overhauled during month and placed in good mechanical condition; other motor vehicle equipment also being overhauled —work still in progress.

January, 1919

Company "E" moved to Spoy (Aube) one and one-quarter kilometers from Fravaux, January 13th, 1919.

Entire battalion in training at Fravaux and Spoy during month: three hours each day devoted to physical exercise, military drill and training, and two hours per day to pistol practice, study and motor mechanics school. Practice march on Friday: battalion inspection on Saturdays.

Six linemen of battalion on special duty at Bar-sur-Aube during month, taking care of telephone installations, maintenance, etc.

During month total of 34 men and 2 officers have been sent on leave.

Preparations made to comply with embarkations instructions No. 13, Hq. S. O. S. by properly marking baggage, etc.

February, 1919

From February 1st to February the 20th, entire battalion in training at Fravaux and Spoy during month; three hours each day devoted to physical exercise, military drill and training, and two hours per day of pistol practice, study in motor mechanic school; practice march on Fridays; battalion inspection on Saturdays.

Six linemen of battalion on special duty at Bar-sur-Aube from February 1st to February 20th, taking care of telephone installations, maintenance, etc.

February 20th entire battalion moved to Montlouis, (Indre-et-Loire) as per Par 4, S. O. 31,, Hdqrs. 1st Army, American E. F. February 17th, 1919.

February 22nd to February 28th engaged in arranging billets, securing Motor and Signal Corps equipment, etc., preparatory to functioning again on active duty.

Engineering detail of 6 men engaged from February 22nd to February 28th in chaining and preparing accurate field notes of toll line from Tours to Gievres, preparatory to repair of same.

XVII

"FRANCE AND US"

THE writer has always felt that if he ever reached the actual point of telling the story of the 411th's participation in the World War, he would touch upon the relationship and associations of the American soldier and the French people. Generally speaking, he believes our organization established as friendly relations with the various French people with whom we came in contact and lived among, as any other organization. And yet, the writer recalls many instances where both officers and men had a rather querulous attitude toward our French friends, and one which he never believed was justified. However, he always had the feeling that there was some psychological reason for this rather universal feeling among the soldiers of the A. E. F. This question, in his mind, was very satisfactorily answered by the reading of an article with the same heading as this chapter by Will Irwin in May, 1919. Believing that the view of the matter which he has so ably presented will be a source of much pleasure and gratification to the average man who saw foreign service, it is reprinted herewith:

He was standing before a jeweler's shop in the Rue de la Paix, Paris pursuing that occupation so popular with the American Expeditionary Force, "booeying" the diamond rings in the windows—a tall, lean, good-looking youth with the shoulder straps of a second lieutenant. I stepped up beside him, myself attracted by the glitter, passed a remark or so, learned that he came from West Virginia, and asked him how he liked it over here.

"Like it?" he said. "You got the wrong word, friend."

"You probably will if you stay long enough," said I.

He faced me.

"You don't mean to tell me you like France!" said he.

'I sure do!" said I.

"And you like the French?" he asked.

"And the French," said I. He opened his mouth as though to speak, shut it again, and simply walked away. What was the use, his manner said, of arguing with a lunatic?

I could not in decency have reported this conversation when it happened, some weeks before the armistice. But the time has come, I feel, to face a certain situation if we are ever going to correct it. The ex-

tremist Echo de Paris, the Royalist organ, came out with it the other day when it spoke of a rift between the French and the Americans. You cannot correct any human tangle without admitting that it exists; so I, who am not only fond of France, but believe in her, begin by admitting that the Echo de Paris was right.

My young lieutenant of the Rue de la Paix was an extreme case of course. Doubtless he would have felt the same about any foreign country. He belonged to the American type recorded by Jacques Futrelle, "who looked over the roofs of Paris and couldn't see where it had anything on Paterson, New Jersey." But still he expressed the extreme of a feeling that has grown up in a part of the American Expeditionary Force. If you looked only on the surface, if you considered the passing moment as eternal you might say that the traditional friendship between the two republics stood in danger.

France is our counterpart in the Old World; the French ideal is most near to our ideal of any on the other side of the water. In these days when we are trying to found the league which is to end war it is most important that the two republics should understand one another. That is why, admitting this situation, I have set myself first to explain it, the second to show that it is only a passing phase.

I suppose that in the beginning we overplayed France; and probably the writing trade, to which I belong, was partly at fault. But it was easy, very easy, to enthuse over France in the days of her trial by fire. The national peril and the national grief had purged her of all pettiness; her men were heroes, her women heroines. We who saw the early stages of the great European struggle knew that France of all the Great Powers bore the smallest responsibility for the disaster, as Germany bore the greatest. We knew that she drew the sword reluctantly, partly to save herself from extinction, partly to fulfill her faith to her ally—Russia; and whatever else may be said of the successive French governments they have always been distinguished by their fidelity to their national obligations.

France in arms struck you always with pathos as well as admiration. To this day the sight of a baggy, ill-fitting French uniform moves me emotionally, it calls up so many memories, heroic and pathetic. Most of all I remember not the dramatic moments but the family men of the French Army going to the Gare de l'Est to plunge back into the hell's kettle of Verdun. That baggy uniform, its horizon blue turned to green by the weather, was hung with a collection of junk—as canteens, haversacks, spare boots, battered helmet, long bayonet—which made the wearer look like a tin peddler rather than a soldier. In one hand he carried his gun; to the other, usually, clung a wife trying to keep back her tears, and often four or five children tagged behind. They were such thorough democrats under the uniform! They looked what they were—plain citizens forced to fight for their homes; and fighting like tigers, but peaceful farmers or paper hangers or grocers, not soldiers, by nature and inclination. There was a glory for us in recalling that this was the only republic in the European War, and that it was the military backbone of the Alliance, so proving that a republic could beat a monarchy at her own game, when necessity arose. American after American came to France in those days quite calm and superior-minded about the war; and the heroism and suffering of France turned him into a partisan.

That feeling as the United States swept on toward war communicated itself to the country. It had, of course, a historic background to work on—the memory of Lafayette and Yorktown—and the republican tradition to give it strength. And a kind of apologetic reaction helped. For though everyone who has studied our school histories knows that France

helped us in the Revolutionary War the popular idea of France was of a frivolous people—in the view of the unco guid, even an immoral people.

The French are not frivolous; though they understand the art of relaxing in their hours of ease they are at bottom deadly serious. The French are no more or less immoral than their Continental neighbors; they owe that old reputation partly to their mental habit of calling a spade a spade, partly to a fashion for a certain kind of story which prevailed in French literature during the very period when Victorian ideals prevented the British or American fictionist from calling a leg a leg.

A Story of Disillusionment

In the light of this new revelation on French character we grew ashamed of our old opinions and went to the other extreme, as Americans have a way of doing. To us, at the moment when we entered the war, every Frenchman was a Lafayette or a Chevalier Bayard.

In that spirit toward France we entered the war. The average American boy in the ranks, who volunteered for service "to help save France," expected to see at the pierhead on the other side an army of giants drilling like clockwork, surrounded by ravishingly beautiful women with sad tearful eyes, who would hail him as a deliverer. He got his initial disillusion at the docks of Bordeaux or Brest or St. Nazaire, when the first detachment of the French Army burst upon his sight. Usually this was a territorial battalion, doing the merely mechanical work of policing the port and guarding German prisoners.

The territorials are men between thirty-eight and forty-five years old, and therefore inferior as first-line troops; they are used only in a pinch for actual front-line fighting. In uniform and equipment they usually got the worst of it; but no French soldier ever gets very much the best of it. The French uniform comes in only three sizes—large, medium and small. It seldom exactly fits anyone. Since loose clothing is more comfortable than tight the welterweights choose middleweight uniforms, and the light heavies heavyweight. So the clothing of any French detachment always looks baggy. Also, since France was obliged to count every penny, the uniforms abandoned early in the war when France took to protective coloration were handed over to the territorials to be worn out. In the same platoon of territorials the American observer beheld red caps incongruously ranged beside horizon-blue overseas caps. The territorial, seeing no real necessity for behaving otherwise, was shockingly loose about drill and about certain points of military etiquette which, the doughboy had been taught, were essential to expert soldiering.

Was that the French Army? Were these the heroes of Verdun? They were, literally. Several brigades of these old shambling territorials found themselves in the trenches before Verdun on the morning of February 21, 1916, when the Germans began the "bombardment of unheard-of intensity" and launched the attack which was to make the Crown Prince heir of a world empire. They gave ground against the very flower of the German Army, but they did not break; they held, these middle-aged, short-breathed family men, until France could get up her reserves, organize her transport, and hold before the Verdun forts. The doughboy had yet to learn—if he ever did learn—that the talent of the French Army is not for drill or parade or military etiquette, but just for fighting—fighting with intelligence, with bravery, with efficiency—fighting like all hell. Even when his military experience took him out of the territorial belt into more active regions, and he encountered the famous French troops, like the immortal Twentieth Corps, the doughboy missed some of the frills. True, such troops as the Twentieth Corps, having the French spirit of drama and behavior appropriate to the emergency, can

put up a most impressive appearance of military snap on occasion, such as a review for a visiting monarch or a presentation of decorations. But even the Twentieth Corps when engaged in the ordinary business of getting from place to place can look like Coxey's Army.

All of which, rightly understood, is a compliment to the French Army. There in the north stood Germany, two-thirds again as large as France, more than twice as rich, and growing richer every day, as France, owing to the hold-up of 1871, was growing poorer every day. She had each of her male citizens under arms for two years. In that two years she must make each Frenchman a better fighter than the corresponding German—it was the only chance she had. So France omitted from her military program all fancy evolution, goose step, unnecessary parade. She taught the army just enough of fours-right and shoulder-arms to get them without unnecessary confusion to the point where they were needed—and no more. For the rest she taught them practical fighting.

Our National Deity in France

The French officer who really understood his business took little pride in seeing his company move as one man on the parade ground. He gloried in the fact that it could intrench faster, by the stop watch, than the next company in the battalion; or that it had been complimented by the general for its skill in taking cover during maneuvers. But we are looking at it with the eye of the average doughboy. He had seen the French Army; and he had a feeling somewhere that people had deceived him.

Nor were some of his later experiences calculated to efface that impression. Perhaps we admire efficiency too much; perhaps the French admire it too little. We like to see men—institutions and men—efficient; but efficiency strikes the average Frenchman, I think, as a mild bore. It has to be practiced now and then of course; he is intelligent enough to see that. But why bother about efficiency between emergencies? Above all, why struggle to give the appearance of efficiency?

I have often watched with amusement the different ways of French and British transport, which are probably equally efficient in a pinch. While resting or while parked the British driver and his helper were always doing something to the old bus—washing, even painting, polishing the brass of the hub cabs until it shone. Beside a British convoy a French convoy looked rather disreputable. The truck bodies got washed now and then—perhaps. Usually they looked dingy. The hub caps were never polished. But when the French driver was seen toying with his car he was busy at the engine. It ran; which to the eye of the Frenchman was the main point. That and a thousand other little points wherein the doughboy could discover differences between Anglo-Saxon ways and French ways fooled him.

In this same matter of transport he did not know that the French organization of 18,000 motor trucks, thrown together in three days, saved the situation at Verdun; nor that this organization, which worked like a watch for six months, became a model for the other European armies. The doughboy watched the Frenchman only in his moments of leisurely work between action and action, when he saw no reason in the world for keeping up the strain, which was disagreeable anyway to his free, artistic Latin nature. As I have said, possibly we make too much of a national god of efficiency; the average member of the A. E. F. watched the S. O. S. of the French Army slouching about and thought scornfully of French ways.

The American soldier landed at Brest, say. As I write this I am looking from the cabin of a homeward-bound transport upon Brest, and I have seen many more attractive spots in sunny France. Just now it is

a model camp. It couldn't be a model camp in the days of "Hurry up, America!" when we were straining every nerve to reach our great average of 300,000 troops landed in a month, and to turn those troops into fighting units. It was never really bad, as the medical records show, but it was not a first-class hotel or a comfortable sylvan retreat either.

A short or long period of drill in camp, and the doughboy was hurried for the final trimmings to a camp somewhere out toward the line. The activities of his regiment or brigade or division centered round some little provincial French town, often only the village center for a few farmers. Before he arrived that town had been through two and a half to three years of war. Every man capable of carrying a rifle or swinging a pick had long ago been taken away. Before his arrival successive waves of troops—native French, colonial French, white British, East Indian British; even, if the town was invaded in 1914, German—had crowded into it, established billets, lived for months, broken billets and passed on. It was lucky if it had escaped attack by aircraft or, during the German advance and retreat, by artillery fire. Once probably, it was a pretty little village with all the doorsteps waxed, with the cobblestones swept clean, with flower boxes in every window. The automobile parties passing through smiled upon it and exclaimed "How picturesque!"

But now—For two or three years armies had scraped off the paint, torn up the floors with their hobnailed boots, broken the windows, used the trees in the village park for hitching posts, ground into everything the grease of overflowing mess tins. Rugs and carpets and curtains had worn out and no one had replaced them. No one had painted or calcimined either—both money and labor were lacking. The town looked like the last rose of summer.

The Wail for Stoves

At best the doughboy, when he got acquainted with the town, missed many a thing which he had been brought up to consider essential in a well-regulated community. Sanitation, for example. In that the French are behind us—but so is all Europe, even England. A town like Bar-le-Duc, for example—large, prosperous, picturesque— with only an open canal for a sewer. Then again he missed stoves. On that question of heating the interior of a house we never shall agree with the Southwestern European. Phillip Gibbs has been writing his impressions of the United States; and he, like every other British discoverer of America, reports that our interiors stifle him. Californians visiting the East for the first time say the same thing.

The French go in for heating even less than the English—it is with them a matter of economy. They put on under-clothing thicker than a board, and stand it—except on the coldest days, when they make up a little fire in the fireplace. The wail of our overseas Army during that first hard winter of 1917-18 was for stoves, stoves, and more stoves.

For humans the doughboy found in these villages the stay-at-homes of a very tired people. They had been through three years of want, of hard work, of danger, of worry, and of the irritation which came from entertaining involuntarily hordes of foreign visitors. The men were gone; so were many of the young women. From tearing their emotions all to pieces the war had come to bore these people to extinction. They were polite, as the Frenchman is to the last ditch; but where was that gay animation the American recruit had expected from the French?

They drilled the doughboy for months, while he dwelt in a billet of the little town or more likely in a colony of board huts on its outskirts. Then one day they marched him up to the line and gave him his round in a quiet sector of the trenches. After that—Montdidier, Chateau-Thierry, Lorraine, St. Mihiel, the Argonne, the Meuse and finally Sedan.

Did he enjoy this? At the time, to speak the cold truth, he did not. I have lived on more or less intimate terms, now, with the armies of five nations, and I here record my opinion that few, very few, liked this war. Talk about the romance of the fight! Except in the air or—what was next to that—on the glaciers of the high Alps, it was about as romantic as the Chicago stockyards. Once during the fighting beyond Montfaucon a staff officer of the Rainbow Division told me that they had just rounded up and pardoned fourteen deserters. These men disappeared during some of the early fighting—at the Vesle, I believe. They were reported as missing. Three or four months later they rejoined their units. In their own defense they declared that they might have deserted, but they'd been fighting nevertheless. Investigation proved them truthful. At the Vesle they had fallen in love with the tanks, had deserted to follow them round, had charged beside them every time they went into action—and, most miraculously, had all come back alive.

Now here were boys who really liked war for itself; but I mention them as an exception. You found that type everywhere, but it was in a distinct minority. One had only to witness a battalion going into action to know that they didn't expect to like it; to witness them coming out to know that the outcome had fulfilled expectation.

Then the armistice, and a long wait in camp for transport home or a hike into Germany. And looking back the doughboy felt that he had had a rotten time. Now even such broad-minded human beings as you and I, dear reader, hate a place where we have had a bad time. It may not be the fault of the place in general, but only of the one dishonest cabman who cheated us; or the one bad restaurant which gave us a poor dinner; or the gods of weather, who sent up a pouring rain that day—we tend to blame it all on the town. And the doughboy, waiting and extremely homesick, laid it all on France.

There was one major grievance which he cherished, and which I, for one, find it hard to explain away. From the moment when he entered France he found himself overcharged.

There was one price for the natives, he discovered, and another for him. This did not happen everywhere; there were places where the mayor or priest took measures with the populace. But these were probably the exception. Perhaps this is not the deep-lying reason for the feelings of part of the A. E. F., but at least it is the reason they most commonly give. I shall not attempt to defend this, but only to explain.

Charge and Overcharge

In the first place the Americans arrived in France preceded by a reputation for wealth without limit. The first comers did nothing, perhaps, to efface this impression. They were our first volunteers; and always in the vanguard of volunteers is an undue proportion of rich men, who can afford to enlist. Being flush and feeling kindly toward France they made "keep the change" their formula. A Frenchman, no matter how rich, never does that. The report flew that they had enormous wealth.

One Frenchman whom I met in a railway carriage had seen the 107th Regiment, which used to be the Seventh, of New York City. He solemnly assured me that every man of them was a millionaire—not in dollars, but in francs. When I disputed this he triumphantly cited their actions to prove his case.

Imagine three thousand millionaires dumped on any American town, and ask yourself if the grocer, the druggist and the hotel keeper would keep their prices down! Moreover, overcharging the soldier was not exclusively a French custom. Our own people did it, until stopped by authority, on the Mexican Border.

Last March some Canadian troops encamped in Western England had a riot which ended in five deaths. Official investigation showed that it started in an attack on local shops which were overcharging the Canadians—own kinsmen to the English.

Again, the rules of the game are different in the Latin countries. Overcharging the stranger is a perquisite of trade. A friend of mine has an office in the post office building, Rome, and lives just outside the walls, at a point placed inconveniently for rapid transit. So he commonly takes one of the little open-faced, one-horse cabs characteristic of the town. It happened that he nearly always called the same cabman, a pleasing person named Giuseppi. The charge was always the same—two and a half lire, with tip.

After three months of this, Giuseppi one evening took only two lire out of a five-lire note.

"Haven't you made a mistake?" asked my friend.

"Oh, no!" said Giuseppi. "You were a stranger when you began to ride with me, but now I see you are settling down among us and I'm charging you Roman prices."

All of this, not with the air of a man performing a virtuous act but of one doing business.

Indeed, the Northern French overcharged their own countrymen who came to them as soldiers from other provinces. Only the French, knowing the language and customs, sat down on the tradesmen when they went too far. We bore it all like patient Americans, but—also like Americans—we kicked violently among ourselves. Nothing so irritated our Army as to feel itself done.

While engaged in telling the whole truth and nothing but the truth I must record that the A. E. F. is not generally pleased with the Y. M. C. A. In this probably the men are scarcely just. The Y. M. C. A. was spotted; it had faults of organization and it made here and there some bad mistakes in choice of personnel. Still, I do not know what we should have done without it. Now in about two cases out of three when the doughboy expresses himself on the Y. M. C. A. he charges that he has paid more for cigarettes or chocolate than at the regular canteens, and has therefore been done, mulcted, bilked.

Little Missionaries

It appears that early in the game both the canteens and the Y. M. C. A. charged cost price for such comforts as chocolate and cigarettes. However, the Y. M. C. A., unlike the canteens, had at first to pay ocean freight and duty on tobacco. With rather bad judgment, I think, they added this into the cost price; and therefore a package of cigarettes which cost eight cents at the canteen, say, cost ten or eleven at the Y. M. C. A. but next door. The doughboy didn't know that; or hearing of it didn't believe it. All he saw was that the Y. M. C. A. was overcharging him; and, as I say, it is his chief grievance against the institution.

Yet this I notice about the American Expeditionary Force. The longer they stayed and the more the contact they had with the French the better they liked the land and the people As a general rule—of course there are many exceptions both ways—the 1917 man liked it better than the 1918 man. So, too, because they had more opportunity of getting about, the officers, I find, liked the country better than the rank and file; and for the same reason the S. O. S. liked it better than the boys who wallowed in the mud of the Front.

One morning I found myself at breakfast at Chaumont with a major in the Medical Corps. He had taken only a brief turn of the Front; his work, since his arrival in the summer of 1917, had lain in a town of the southeast, where he had not only ran a hospital but helped in caring for

the civilian population. And he was an enthusiast over France and Frenchman.

"I wasn't at first," he said. "We came down there full of affection for France, friendly as the dickens. The French we met were coldly polite; behind this shell I felt that they were watching us; that we never had their full confidence. Then they began to overcharge us. We knew that, and the boys resented it. Yes, the reasons for overcharging were what you say; but there was another, which I think you've missed. The German whispering propaganda had been busy, very busy. The people had been told that our American millionaires forced us into the war to make up for the losses on their loans to the Allies, that when it was all over we'd have a mortgage on France. They really thought, I believe, that we came into the war just to make money. Soaking us on prices was their way of getting a little of it back before we owned the country.

"I think the children were the first missionaries. Of course our boys liked the children, and the children liked them. Well, some of the kids had been having a hard time—not a piece of candy since the war started, and running round barefooted in cold weather. If you want to know what the strain of the war has been on France get out of Paris and see a little town like mine. The boys began to give them chocolate; and sometimes when they found a little fellow with his feet on the ground they'd club together and get him some shoes. The people saw this; and it didn't match up with the idea of a mercenary invader who had come to grab France.

"I suppose the ice was broken first when the mothers began to drop in to thank the boys for what they'd done—nice, cordial Frenchwomen, whose ways the boys liked. Then all of a sudden the whole town got chummy. There isn't an old Frenchwoman in town who wasn't mothering two or three American boys—sewing on their buttons and all that sort of thing. And the boys feel toward them as though they were their own people. And from that very time the prices they charged us came down to town level. There isn't a boy in my outfit who isn't pro-French—most of them will be writing letters back to the town for a long time after the war.

"With the French Army, or at least the officers, it took a little longer. Oh, yes—they were polite—just too polite. I never understood, myself, the difference between that politeness and real cordiality until after the Battle of Chateau-Thierry. The morning after we received the news that the Regulars and Marines had stopped the boche flat footed at the Marne, three French officers came into my quarters. They stepped up to my desk and saluted, and the senior officer made a little speech:

"'We're really comrades now'! I remember he said; and when they shook hands with me one of them was crying. From that time on we were real friends—we'd got through the veil of politeness. You see, they'd been from Missouri on us. We looked good, yes—but could we fight? Would we fight without the incentive of hate? We'd shown ourselves poor haters. They knew now not only that we could fight but that we were a litter of wildcats."

General Good Feeling

Before the armistice I had noted here and there among our American troops, especially among the new divisions, that undercurrent of ill feeling of which I am now treating. It seemed a shame; for by every test which I could put we were at that moment a pet nation with the French. An official of the French Government concerned with the morale of the country worked last August a very ingenious plan—which I regret that I may not describe—to try out French feeling. It showed that we were decidedly popular with the people in general. In fact, my Eng

lish friends in Paris showed by chary British comments that they were a little jealous.

"Ah, yes, one loves his latest sweetheart best!" said one of them to me.

On the night of the armistice I saw four or five American flags carried by the Parisian populace to one British or Belgian or Italian.

Still, we have our faults, surprising as it may seem; and contact with an alien people is a great searcher of national faults. The American character travels straight toward results. We are impatient with side issues; and all the old, crowded, complex European nations consider side issues to a degree which we can never fully appreciate. We have not—no northern people has—the exquisite surface courtesy which a Frenchman never loses.

In our anxiety to get results we were often tactless from a French point of view. This cause of irritation was exaggerated by our general ignorance of the language. I wonder if the American schools, after this, will teach us speaking French instead of the book French they taught in my generation. And we ran into certain French peculiarities which we found it hard to understand. For example, early in our war a fine old chateau near Bordeaux was leased for a headquarters. By the terms of the lease we were to leave everything exactly as we found it. The chateau in its four or five hundred years of existence had never known sanitary plumbing; the owners bathed in washbasins or rubber tubs. Expecting to stay a long time we installed, by permission, drains, bathtubs, toilets, a water-heating system.

When the Boys Whooped It Up

When, last January, we ended the lease and moved out the officer who conducted the business offered to leave the plumbing where it was, since its removal would cost as much as it was worth. The French owner refused. We had to take out our plumbing. What he wanted from that chateau was not sanitation but venerable beauty and the sense that he dwelt in the same identical house as his ancestor of the tenth generation back. The American finds it hard to understand such a point of view; and he is a bit brusque in expressing his opinion thereon.

In discussing another of our failings I must begin by an explanation. Not the least of our pride in the Expeditionary Force was its good behavior. For general morals we were the prize winners. But of course soldiers in a non-prohibition country will get drunk now and then. One reason for our prohibition wave is the fact that many Americans have no moderation in their use of alcohol, and that they sometimes tend, when drunk, to tear up the sidewalks. Your French poilu who in his reaction from the trenches took to liquor got a blissful and genial jag, which expressed itself in talkativeness and in flirtation. The American whooped it up.

As two coyotes on a moonlit night can give the impression of a whole wolf pack, so two drunken Americans could give the appearance of a drunken Army. They might be surrounded by fifty poilus, all half-seas over; it was the Americans whom one noticed.

This tendency brought its most deplorable effects in Paris. The capital of the world was not a leave center. Nevertheless all sorts of commissions and activities centered there; soldiers were constantly coming and going on military errands; moreover, though Paris was officially barred, men nevertheless got Paris leave by pull or cajolery. In spite of the provost marshal and the military police we always had the American drunk with us; and when present he always announced himself. The French, who, as I have said, grow merely genially expansive with liquor, did not like this.

Nevertheless, French feeling did not begin to change until we locked horns a bit at the Peace Conference; at one time, indeed, there was a locking of horns all along the line. For fifty years—even before the Franco-Prussian War—Germany has been the nightmare of France. There she sat on the northern border, waiting, France rightly felt, the first opening to swoop down and to complete the enslavement begun in 1870. All this time France had borne a heavier and heavier burden of armament taxation just because Germany was arming more and more.

The nightmare came true in 1914; and it surpassed the imagination of the most pessimistic Frenchman. To most Frenchmen beyond middle age the evil institution of predatory war was identical with Germany; and lasting peace meant the suppression of Germany, and nothing else. Moreover, all France came into the era of "arms down" in a curiously abnormal state of nerves. The strain—and no one who has not been through it can imagine it—had been too great for humanity to bear. They stood up to it, these nervously organized French, until the last moment of need; then in many of them something snapped. As I hurried toward the boulevards on the morning when the armistice was announced the first thing I noticed was the number of women weeping. Afterward many and many a woman or middle-aged man of my knowledge or acquaintance had a nervous collapse. All nerves were in fact much less normal than during the war.

In that state a number of able, highly patriotic and well-willed but slightly old-fashioned French statesmen came against Wilson, with his League of Nations and his ideas of a far-reaching settlement to end the causes of war. To say that the French Government as at present constituted is against the League of Nations would be putting the whole thing falsely.

"What we want," said one official to me, "is a strong League of Nations—that's the point."

However, with their intense nationalism their idea of a strong league meant mainly something which would guard France against Germany. With this always in view they asked more, often, than their confreres of the League of Nations or the Peace Conference thought it possible to grant.

Now M. Clemenceau, the iron man of France, was least of all among the French delegates convinced on the League of Nations question. He cannot be described as exactly hostile; but, as a British friend put it to me, his attitude is "sympathetic cynicism." Still, he would welcome what the French consider a strong league. And Clemenceau is a fighter —all his life he has fought with everything he had from his eyebrows to his toenails. Opposed on the slightest proposition he goes at his opponent's throat.

The Noisy Minorities

M. Clemenceau understands as well as the next man that the plain French people favor a League of Nations or any other plan which promises to end war. And he is enough of a democrat to wish to represent his people. But he is also implacable on Germany; and when opposed on that question he bares his teeth and gives his celebrated imitation of the tiger.

Another thing complicated the program. With the unexpected arrival of victory the imperialistic element in every Allied nation woke up, rubbed hands and said, "Now is our chance." France is about five per cent Royalist; and those people will never see affairs except in the light of the struggle for empire. France has its gentlemen of high finance, who would welcome empire because it would be good for business. So have Italy and Britain, for that matter; and so have we. Let us not cast the first stone.

Reading the spirit of our polities from the other side of the water I think I trace in some of the opposition to the League of Nations a body of gentlemen who want an empire clear down to the Isthmus, with all accompanying trappings of a huge standing army and gum-shoe diplomacy. It would be good business, and it would be "swell." Only, these gentlemen dare not express themselves openly.

The French are more frank. The gun barrels of Armagedeon were not yet cleaned before the Royalists and the imperialists were demanding everything in sight, fathering a policy which would mean glory for a time, and then—more war, under the horrible, intensified conditions of "the next war." Again I say, the French were not alone in possessing this element.

Now there are in Paris two newspapers of great technical excellence which represented this class—the Echo de Paris, Royalist, and Figaro, Clerical with Royalist leanings. From the day of the armistice they demanded things. They began with the disarmament of the left bank of the Rhine, then demanded possession of the left bank, and then, the pipe drawing freely, thirty kilometers the other side. No one, outside of a few countingrooms and of certain Royalist circles where people discuss over tea their lost cause, ever took these proposals seriously. The disarmament of the left bank—that is another proposition. The Rhine Valley has always been a pistol pointed at the heart of France. Disarmament of the left bank would draw the cartridge; and—if I may prophesy—it will be disarmed.

Bewildered Correspondents

Now from the first these two organs set up Wilson as a bugaboo; and, along with him, Wilson's country. Out of courtesy they put on the soft pedal during the period of Wilson's official visit. No sooner was the conference down to business than they started up again.

And with Wilson had arrived a shipload of first-class Washington correspondents and star reporters to do the Peace Conference for our press. I will match the American newspaperman against any of his contemporaries across the water, and give odds. The more I see of the foreign press the more on the whole I admire the American. But just let me hint that some of them, though wonders on a big fire, marvels on a national election and world-beaters on the tariff, wobbled a bit at first on French atmosphere and world politics. In our splendid isolation our newspapers and newspaper men have never much regarded Europe as anything but a place where the rich traveled and broke the bank at Monte Carlo and got their jewels stolen, whereas the most mediocre little Fleet Street reporter discoursed on the Balkan problem and the German plot against Persia and France's future in Morocco. In five or ten years of world contact we shall change all that, but I am speaking of now.

The American reporter walked into Europe and read or had translated to him a hot leader of Petrinax from the Echo de Paris and felt all his sense of nationality injured. The popular Matin and Petit Parisien—this last has ten times the circulation of the Echo de Paris—might be most kind and complimentary on that day. Humanly, he did not notice them. He noticed the Echo de Paris.

Then he misread the French he met in Paris, as almost every American does in the beginning. I know;; for I've been through it myself. The true Frenchman has a pessimistic pose. He is, I think, always playing a little game with himself. If one thinks things are coming out well he'll be so horribly disappointed if they come out badly! If one thinks things are coming out badly how happily surprised he'll be if they come out well! Let us therefore work for the best and expect the worst.

From 1914 clear through to 1918 Americans over only a month or so have come to me and whispered: "These people can't last more than two or three months longer. They say so themselves!"

Paris is very gossipy; and the gossip is always pessimistic.

Many a man who had read the Echo de Paris listened to the French and got the straight of some events inside the conference or the subsidiary committees, rushed to the wire or to the mail chute with a story true as to its facts but untrue—though he wrote sincerely—in the importance he gave to those facts. The stories grapevined back to France; and that stirred up more hard feeling.

Well, I myself must be careful to temper facts with a sense of proportion. Do not believe that the attitude which I have described in the American Army is universal or even typical.

Anyone, as I have said, dislikes a place where he happened to have a bad time; so, too, he likes a place where he had a good time. When he begins to think he had a gloriously good time he will begin unconsciously to like France. If your boy when he first comes home has some acrimonious words to say about the sister republic don't pay any attention to him. Wait two or three years until he has attended a few camp-fire reunions and then, at a moment when he has forgotten what he said when he first came home, put the question and hear what he has to say. Don't wait too long if you want the truth. By ten years he will have swung to the other extreme.

As for the old-timer, who has had a chance to get acquainted with France and the French—listen to him. He has seen—past the fluff—the sober solidity of French family life, the beautiful strength of their natural ties. He has learned that though the French have some ways in business irritating to us they get the business of the world done in a manner most astonishing. He knows that though, like the peasant Scotch and the native New Englander, they are close and thrifty they have back of their thrift a stern sense of obligation. He knows that, like America, France is made up of all kinds of people, some of whom you like and some of whom you don't. But the charm of the people—with their courtesy, their sense of humor, their way, like an amiable dog, of entering into the spirit of the occasion—has probably got to him, as it gets to every man of good will. The combination of charm and character cannot be beaten in the end.

Perhaps indeed he has gone a little further and reached the French mind. He can tell you then that they are a nation of thinkers, with a talent for looking facts in the face; that however lively the play of surface emotion the little hard French head is always sitting apart, cooly thinking. He may have gone far enough to know that the French schools and universities are, in two-thirds of the exact sciences, better and sounder than those German universities which were such a craze with our world of learning before the war. The German, you see, knew how to advertise; the French did not.

Before I left Paris I talked this situation over with a wise Frenchman who admires America and who wants above all things to maintain a friendship not of the governments so much as of the peoples. Though he admitted the facts I found him calm, unperturbed.

The Building of Friendship

"We're going through a necessary stage of friendship," he said. "When you first meet your friend he is wonderful, wonderful. Then you find that he has his disagreeable traits, his little ways that jar upon you. You weather that, take him as he comes—and you're friends."

"'A friend is one who knows the worst about you, and doesn't give a damn!'" I quoted.

"Exactly. The idea with which you Americans came—that we were all super-humanly brave and good and beautiful—couldn't last a week after you saw the reality, because we're just people like you.

"Did you ever consider," he added, "how trying it is to entertain a stranger; or to be entertained? There isn't a family of my acquaintance which I like well enough to dare to take under the same roof with my family for six months. We'd all get on each other's nerves. You've come here, two million three hundred thousand men, and thousands and thousands of men and women in auxiliary services. You've saturated France. I suppose there is no village so small that it hasn't had Americans, if only one military policeman. We didn't invite you to come—as individuals. In that sense we were forced upon each other. Good will and patriotism carried both sides a long way; but inevitably we got a little on each other's nerves. That will pass too; we'll get down to a working basis of friendship.

"I've been through all this before. The British came to us in 1914. They never saturated France as you have done, because they could keep so many of their activities at home. Except for a little occupation of Paris at first they never went much beyond the northwestern corner. Do you know that toward the end of 1915 personal relations got a little strained? We were snapping at each other, no one knew exactly why. That stage passed, naturally and without much effort on either side. We've got down to working friendship with the British. We know the worst about each other, and don't give a damn."

As the years roll on, we will think less and less of the few unpleasant experiences we had in the A. E. F., and remember only those things which gave us the greatest pleasure. We will remember the many courtesies and favors bestowed upon us by the French people in the various communities where we were billeted, and forget the times when we were slightly overcharged for a bottle of wine or a feed, when our appetite was fuller than our purse. "VIVE LA FRANCE"

He Says: "A Good German."

XVIII

HOMEWARD BOUND

WE arrived at Brest on March 26, 1919, the following day and marched out over the old, somewhat familiar road the same as upon our arrival in March, 1918, but upon reaching Pontonezen, we beheld a complete transformation. Where there had only been the old stone barracks then there was now a regular little city of barracks, tents, kitchens, delousing establishments, bath houses and every other conceivable establishment for the handling of troops. We were told that they had taken care of as many as 70,000 troops at one time. Compared with the hard-board beds and cold quarters which had been our lot upon arrival a little over a year ago, we "were sitting on the world." While we had some rather disagreeable details given to us during our stay in Brest, our food was good, we were able to get good baths whenever we wanted them, and we were all so happy to be just on the eve of our departure for the States, that work, even though dirty, did not worry us much.

After we had received the usual and necessary delousings, re-outfittings of clothing, equipment, etc., and received the requisite number of inspections, the day of departure finally arrived. Our scant supply of francs and centimes were changed into good old U. S. dollars and cents and we found ourselves "walking up that gang plank." The U. S. Cruiser Charleston was to be our transport for return home, and we pulled up anchor at 10 A. M., April 10, 1919, steaming slowly out of the harbor of Brest. Although our hearts were overflowing with gladness that we were now on our way to the homeland, it was not without many pangs of regret and sadness that we stood at the rail of the ship and watched the shores of France gradually merge into the horizon and pass out of sight. For more than thirteen months we had been practically her guests; we had the

1. Leaving Camp Mills.
3. Three new "Louies."
4. Band's farewell concert Montlouis.
5. Meeting with homefolks at Oakland.
2. First sight of "Miss Liberty."

opportunities of learning French customs, quite a bit of their language and their courteous hospitality. We had made many friends; in fact some of the friendships bordered on romances; we had experienced with their delightful people many of their deep sorrows during the dark days of 1918, and all of their joys in the victory celebrations following the end of the war. In our heart of hearts we knew that our pleasant experiences and friendships would long outlive the memory of our discomforts and disappointments.

Our Commanding Officer, Captain A. B. Coates, was the commanding officer of troops on board, and as the Battalion was the only regular organization, the remainder being casuals, it fell to our lot to take care of the supervisory work of handling the berthing, messing, etc., of the officers and men of the Army. All this might have gone very well, if practically everybody aboard had not come under the spell of sea-sickness before we were more than two hours at sea. For the first three or four days there was hardly a corporal's guard in the mess line or anywhere else except the bunks. A few old "sea-dogs" of our outfit weathered the storm and were able to maintain some semblance of order among the troops aboard until gradually, as the storm wore iself out, recruits were put in service and order restored.

What a difference in this homeward bound trip and the one over. After the storm had subsided and those who had been so deathly sea-sick had ceased to wish that the ship would strike a mine, groups could be seen forming here and there all over the ship, and what was the topic of their conversation? What they had done in the war? Indeed not! Instead, "What I am going to do as soon as I get out;" "Believe me, I am going to have some feed when I hit New York;" "Oh boys, won't our American girls look good," etc., etc. A spirit of jolly cheer pervaded all and the only disturbing element was that the old ship couldn't go fast enough to reach the end of our ocean voyage. And when land was sighted and we sailed slowly up through New York's lower harbor, past the Statute of Liberty, to Hoboken, amid the shrill whistles of factory and river craft and the cheering thousands of our own countrymen, our

hearts were filled with gratitude that we were again setting foot on U. S. soil.

We arrived in Hoboken on April 21st, going directly to Camp Mills, N. J., where we remained for eight days. During this time we all had an opportunity of visiting New York, and the days passed very pleasantly, although everybody was anxious to be on the way home to families and friends. We left Camp Mills on April 29th, arriving in San Francisco on May 4th. The members of the Battalion from Oregon, Washington and other northern points left us at Granger, Wyoming, at which point they were transferred to the Oregon Short Line for Camp Lewis. The writer must here leave the northern delegation as he has no record of what happened to them as a body after leaving the southern crowd at Granger. On the evening of May 5th the Battalion was officially welcomed home at the San Francisco Commercial Club under the auspices of the Telephone Society. The talks, eats and usual stunts at a banquet of this kind will be left to the imagination of the reader and we will pass on to the real dramatic incident of the evening. The silken Stars and Stripes of our own Battalion colors, borne by our color guard, were brought into the banquet hall and returned to the Telephone Company to be preserved for all time. Mr. Henry T. Scott, who had been at the head of a group of distinguished telephone and army officials at the time the colors were presented to the Battalion at Monterey, made the acceptance speech. In a voice trembling with emotion and tears of happiness dimming his eyes, he made a little talk of acceptance that will be remembered all their lives by those present. His voice, his manner and gestures expressed the heartfelt, wholesouled welcome which he, on behalf of our friends and associates, wished us to feel. It is to be regretted that every man belonging to the organization could not have heard this talk and enjoyed the atmosphere of the occasion, as it would have been a most pleasant place of adieu from the comradeship in arms back into civilian activities.

XIX

LOOKING FORWARD

UPON completion of this chapter, our narrative of the 411th will come to a close. The writer has been thinking for many months that there ought to be some way of perpetuating the friendships and comradeships formed during our period of service together. Whenever and wherever you meet any of your buddies from the old outfit, you always have a talkfest, don't you? You begin recalling old times; one will bring up some incident that happened at Monterey; another something during the trip through the canal or on the ship crossing the Atlantic; another one of the Big Parties put on at "Madame Cocand's" in Savenay; another of the rats at Avacourt; still another of a particularly good time in Paris, etc., etc.

Wouldn't it be a good plan to organize "The Four-Eleventh Association," with a General Secretary at some central point? He would collect information from Corresponding Secretaries, located at as many places as might be found necessary, and thus be able to keep in touch with all former members. He would issue a bulletin of news or "memories" three or four times a year, containing personal information about the men scattered all over the country. The writer believes there will be much real enjoyment in the remaking of old friendships, which have been neglected but not forgotten; and, perhaps, some day, we might have a grand reunion at old Monterey. Are you for it? All right!

"George" has kindly consented to act as General Secretary of the proposed Association. What "George?" R. O. Rutherfurd, of course. He is now located with the Traffic Department of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company at Sacramento, Calif. He will outline a plan and submit it to you in the very near future.

The following personnel roster has been prepared to enable readers of "Memories" to get in touch with old comrades.

and to serve as a ready means of recalling some name at any time in the future. The addresses are the very latest which it has been possible to obtain after continued correspondence all over the country:

PERSONNEL ROSTER

Abbott, C. S. ..... 1437 Sixth St., Alameda, Calif.
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Adams, Albert S. ..... 457 D Ave., Coronado, Calif.
Agard, Roy H. ..... 111 W. 2nd St., Tulsa, Okla.
Agnew, T. C. ..... Box 501, Keokuk, Iowa
Albertson, Asel L. ..... Box 318 Idaho Falls, Idaho
Allison, Theo P. ..... Box H, Fowler, Calif.
Anderson, Alfred ..... *Santa Rosa, Calif.
Andrews, William R. ..... 3901 Delmar Blvd., St. Louis, Mo.
Atkinson, Chas. B. ..... 451 E. 39th St., Los Angeles, Calif.

Bach, Gilbert W. ..... 4716 N. Winchester St., Chicago, Ill.
Bachelor, Arthur H. ..... 326 E. 54th St., Seattle, Wash.
Bacon, Bruce ..... 269 S. 12th St., San Jose, Calif.
Bailey, Orrin W. ..... 1611½ Ash St., Spokane, Wash.
Baird, Richard B. ..... 286 Tillamook St., Portland, Ore.
Barbour, W. C. ..... *Spokane, Wash.
Barker, Christopher S. ..... 88 N. Marengo St., Pasadena, Calif.
Barker, Elmer F. ..... Beattie, Kansas
Barnes, Walter ..... War, W. Va.
Barnes, William W. ..... Davey, W. Va.
Barrett, Richard M. ..... 1599½ Belmont St., Portland, Ore.
Bays, Thomas J. ..... 1814 Ashmore Place, Los Angeles, Calif.
Beardslee, Leonard L. ..... 112 Oak St., Modesto, Calif.
Bechtold, Jacob V. ..... *Los Angeles, Calif.
Beebe, Carroll E. ..... 50 Post St., San Francisco, Calif.
Becker, Ernest T. ..... 219 Ramona St., Palo Alto, Calif.
Beisell, Albert ..... 526 N. 105th St., Portland, Ore.
Bennett, George R. ..... 1106 Magnolia St., So. Pasadena, Calif.
Bevan, Albert E. ..... 1222 W. 22nd St., Los Angeles, Calif.
Biedebach, Henry E. ..... 292 Galena Ave., Pasadena, Calif.
Bischoff, William L. ..... 961 Bates St. S. E., Grand Rapids, Mich.
Blair, Lewis A. ..... *Chico, Calif.
Blair, Robert H. ..... 200 Ferguson Bldg., Los Angeles, Calif.
Blessing, James H. ..... *San Francisco, Calif.
Blue, Albert A. ..... 132 Clinton Park, San Francisco, Calif.
Boggs, Paul P. ..... 1 McKinley Ave., Baldwin Harbor, L.I., N. Y.
Borne, Hal R. ..... *Albany, Ore.
Boyle, Cecil A. ..... 453 E. Burnside, Portland, Ore.
Brainard, Lawrence W. ..... Payette, Idaho
Brakel, Leslie ..... *Portland, Ore.
Brant, A. W. ..... 551 Washington St., Portland, Ore.
Brome, George H. ..... P. O. Box 921, R. F. D. No. 4, Los Angeles, Calif.
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Bruce, Robert I. ..... 539 Day St., San Francisco, Calif.
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Certain, Fred ..... 1223 S. Branson St., Marion, Ind.
Chamberlin, James A. ..... Care J. N. Chamberlin *San Francisco, Calif.
Clark, Russell J. ..... Care First Nat'l Exchange, 509 Fifth Ave, N. Y.
Clements, Henry D. ..... Care H. P. Worthington, 935 Security Bldg., Los Angeles, Calif.
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Cole, Charles F. ..... *San Francisco, Calif.
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Conable, Max D. ..... Gold, Potter Co., Pa.
Conlin, Michael ..... 4801 Halsted St., Chicago, Ill.
Counaway, Elton ..... 756 Race St., Denver, Colo.
Connell, Bruce ..... Colorado Bank & Trust Co., Denver, Colo.
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DeVecchio, Walter W. ..... 86 Otis St., San Francisco, Calif.
Dobbas, Eugene B. ..... 1705 H St., Sacramento, Calif.
Dolan, John A. ..... Care Inter-Allied Rhineland High Commission Coblenz, Germany, Europe
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Ellis, Thomas Adrian ..... Niotaze, Kansas
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Fisher, Jesse B. — 2002 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif.
Fowler, Edwin W. — 2122 Cambridge St., Los Angeles, Calif.
Foote, C. H. — *Richmond, Calif.
Frace, James A. — 616 S. Oaks St., Tacoma, Wash.
Freeman, Lloyd — 816 Sheridan Ave., Tacoma, Wash.

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Gershon, Arthur — 4834 Prairie Ave., Chicago, Ill.
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Gillett, George G. — 1542 W. 55th St., Los Angeles, Calif.
Gingras, Harry L. — Box 25, Ashland, N. H.
Gio, Fred A. — Oregon City, Ore.
Glass, Harry H. — 1327 E. 41st St., Los Angeles, Calif.
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Gottfried, LaVon E. — *Portland, Ore.
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Graham, Emmett J. — 548 South St., Hollister, Calif.
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Gray, Leslie L. — 2201 Clinton Ave., Alameda, Calif.
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Hines, Harry E. — Barton, N. D.
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Hons, Alfred H. — 86 Otis St., San Francisco, Calif.
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Kidd, Martin C. ..... 2100 M St., Sacramento, Calif.
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Krater, Alexander C. ..... Independence, Inyo Co., Calif.
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Kurtz, August L. ..... Saratoga, Calif.

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Laverty, Ralph W. ..... 1123 Devisadero St., San Francisco, Calif.
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Theroux, George ..... Care Fred A. Gio, Oregon City, Ore.
Thomas, Edwin S. ..... 266 N. 15th St., Portland, Ore.
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Vehslage, Herman C. ..... Artois, Glenn Co., Calif.
Vochatzer, George W. ..... Merrill, Ore.
Vogel, Arthur M. ..... 1721 15th St., Superior, Wis.

Wagner, Ralph E. ..... 23 Homestead St., San Francisco, Calif.
Ward, Arthur B. ..... 3804 California St., San Francisco, Calif.
Ward, Louis J. ..... Letterman General Hospital, San Francisco, Calif.
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Wilkinson, Leland S. ..... 115 W. Green St., Ithaca, N. Y.
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Williams, Robert E. ..... 913 N. 12th St., St. Joseph, Mo.
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Woodward, Daniel D. ..... *Portland, Ore.
Woodward, Franklyn H. ..... P. O. Box 213, Milwaukee, Ore.
Woolsey, Harold B. ..... 1146 Formosa Ave., Hollywood, Calif.
Woolsey, Leon H. ..... Tehachapi, Calif.
Worthington, H. P. ..... 935 Security Bldg., Los Angeles, Calif.

Yarnell, Donald M. ..... 800 Howard Ave., Altoona, Pa.
Young, Neal D. ..... Shirley, Maine
Younger, Robert C. ..... 1240 Dolores Way, Sacramento, Calif.

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In conclusion, the writer knows of no better creed to leave with his old comrades than to quote the preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion:

"For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred per cent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our association in the Great War; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

FINIS.

Members of Battalion at Domremay, birthplace of Joan d'Arc, "The Maid of Oreleans."

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DISMISSED!

MEMORIES

This little sheet is a sample of what we should like to send, periodically, to all members of the old 411th. In it we want to distribute to everyone, little items of interest; news of present whereabouts, trials, tribulations and perhaps recall a few scandals of the past. Many are the times when we have a few quiet moments to ourselves for thought and reminiscence that we recall those good old times. Bad sometimes, sure! But we have forgotten most of these. We even recall with pleasure the time in Monterey when, filled with self-importance over the fact that we had just learned to drive a motorcycle, we smashed the blamed thing up and were nearly court-martialed for it. We get little tugs at the heart-strings over many of the old memories, not the least of these one of Borne passing out the "rice and" in the grey dawn, and when we remember Miller and Bailey after a day in the wilderness pushing the old Garford over the slippery places on the road from Fort de Bois Bourrus. With rapture we close our eyes and see big Torrey directing the French "jazz" orchestra at Mont Luis.

We get homesick for a talk with the old "gang", get to wondering where they are, what they are doing. Where is Morris, how is Patterson, Burns, Brant, what is Davies doing these days?

Don't you see the possibilities? If this sheet is the means of getting the old bunch together, of placing one in touch with another; if it remakes old friendships, not forgotten but neglected, it will have served its purpose. Let's keep it alive. Who knows but that it may be the means of, someday, getting us all together for a grand reunion!

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The Government printing office has on sale a pamphlet of interest to all who served in France and especially to those who operated with the First Army. It is entitled the "Final Report of Gen. John J. Pershing." The cost is eighty-five cents and it may be had by writing to Mr. J. H. Brinker, Superintendent of Government Printing, Washington D. C. The pamphlet contains maps and accounts of all American operations.

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All hail! Jess Fisher is married. The happy couple have a comfortable billet in one of Los Angeles' best apartments. He drives his own car and furnishes his own gasoline. Jess will be remembered as the boy whose credit was always good with the mess-sergeant.

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Dr. McCoy has received a permanent commission in the Medical Corps, Regular Army. The Major is stationed at the Letterman Hospital, Presidio of San Francisco. Ask "Doc" who threw the hand-full of shells in the fire at Lemmes?

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"Sacramento" Joe O'Niel is still on the job in the town of his enlistment. Joe is very active in the American Legion being present at all meetings when chow is served.

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Grant DuBois, erstwhile battalion supply sergeant, is pursuing somewhat similiar duties in the Traffic Department in Sacramento. We often wonder if he would again like to make that trip from Savenay to St. Etienne "per Motorcycle".

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Harold W. Northup hasn't yet gotten over the habit of hiding his watch every time he sees a Frenchman. "Wampus" is now handling the commissary chest for the Construction Department and smokes the same brand.

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We want to hear from every person who receives this initial copy. Give us comments and whatever news items you can provide. It has been estimated that with six issues a year (one every two months) twenty-five cents from each will cover the postage and cost of the paper.

If you change your address let us know. The whole outfit is interested in what you are doing -- and we are trying to provide the medium. With the "Battalion History" and your "file" of this sheet you will have a little story of every man who was in the organization. Twenty years from now your children will want to know about how Jerry Hurley was wounded in the Argonne - and "Where is he now, Papa?" You can tell them that Jerry is still hiking sticks for The P.T. & T.Co. and getting all fixed for a pension.

Address all communications to

G. R. Rutherfurd,
1411 "J" Street,
Sacramento, California.

c/o The P.T. & T.Co.

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